Student Leadership in Black Schools

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STUDENT LEADERSHIP IN BLACK SCHOOLS

By

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SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF EDUCATION

IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND

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JANUARY 1998
DECLARATION

I declare that this Dissertation: 'Student Leadership In Black Schools' represents my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.'
DEDICATION

This dissertation

is dedicated to

MRS H.H. SATIMBURWA
my late mother

and

BUKISILE PATIENCE
my wife
and my children

MUKAI, MUFARO and AYANDA
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With profound gratitude I wish to express my indebtedness to the many people who assisted me toward the completion of this study:

* God, for granting me the opportunity to undertake this study;

* My very sincere thanks and appreciation go to my study leaders Professor G. Urbani and Dr A van der Merwe, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Zululand, for the sound guidance, effective instructions, constructive criticism and encouragement they gave me during the course of this study;

* My wife, Bukisile Patience, for having remained a persistent source of inspiration and a beacon of light throughout this intellectual exercise; and

* Mrs Val van Rooyen who set aside her other pressing duties to type this dissertation.

* * * * * * *
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SUMMARY

The aim of this study was:

* to describe the life-world of the student leadership group in "black" schools; and

* to determine, in the light of findings obtained, certain guidelines for student leaders which will help equip them with leadership skills.

As an introduction, the background of student leaders in traditionally black schools was given. The demands they made for the institution of a democratically elected student representative council (SRC) were discussed. From the literature study it became clear that the black student leaders and their followers, the students, succeeded to impose their leadership on schools despite resistance from education authorities. They rejected the concept of prefects. They regarded prefects as a non-elected body of student leaders that was collaborative with the principal and staff. Once in power, black student leaders rejected the authority of their educators and took control of the school situation. Conflict and disruption of schools ensued from this state of affairs.

In discussing the life-world of the student leadership, the background in which the black student leaders and their followers are brought up was exposed. It was stated that they come from a society which is rife with overcrowding, poverty, unemployment, political violence and political and social repression. They are brought up in a society that is experiencing low ethical values and that has nurtured the sentiments of powerlessness and frustration. It is in this politico-economic society where their education is enshrined. What emerges is that their behaviour and attitude are shaped by negative factors which are entrenched in this environment. The education they have been offered has been iniquitous and has rendered them inadequate to face the demands of daily life. Most students cannot
cope with poverty, overcrowding, unemployment and lack of recreational facilities. This type of education has rendered student leaders and their followers helpless and it has further generated inadequacy within them in dealing with their aspirations in a racially complex society. They regard schools as a place of failure, as an outlet for their revenge and as centres of their struggles.

From this research it became clear that student leaders in traditionally black schools lack positive leadership skills which they require to equip them to face the challenges of a democratic dispensation.

Chapter 4 is an attempt to address all the aspects of leadership and the leadership skills required to equip student leaders in their endeavour to realise sound educational goals and objectives. It is imperative that educators, members of the community, the governing body and other role players plan and execute leadership programmes which will help student leaders develop self-respect, respect for their fellow-students and respect for significant others. Student leaders are expected to be role models for other students, and their attitude and behaviour should be acceptable. Educators are expected to help student leaders channel their energy towards positive reshaping of the school situation, and hence the realisation of educational goals.

In the light of the findings of this research, the following were recommended:

* A proactive empowerment programme whereby parents, community members, teachers and educational authorities restore the dignity and value system of the educational environment in order address the problems of the student leaders and their followers.

* A support and counselling system whereby educators, educational authorities and the state help student leaders and their followers to deal with their social and psychological past.
Leadership training programmes to equip student leaders with leadership skills such as negotiation, problem-solving, decision-making, communication and conflict resolution skills. Leadership symposia, seminars and other related projects to develop student leaders’ capacity to lead in schools.

It is trusted that this study on student leadership in black schools will eventually lead to a better quality of student leadership, generating adult leaders, who will be able to serve in a positive and exemplary fashion in a new South Africa.
Die doel van die studie was:

* om deur middel van 'n literatuurstudie aandag te gee aan die leefwêreld van die studenteleier in "swart" skole; en

* om in die lig van die onderzoek enkele aanbevelings te maak ten einde die studenteleier met leierseisakkappe toe te rus.

Ter inleiding is 'n oorsig van leierskap in tradisioneel swart skole gedoen. Die eise wat gestel is, is bespreek. Uit die literatuurstudie wou dit blyk dat swart studenteleiers en hulle navolgers (studente) daarin geslaag het om hulle leierskap in skole af te dwing ten spyte van weerstand van onderwyshoofde. Die "prefekte" konsept is egter verwerp. Laasgenoemde is gesien as 'n studenteliggaam wat nie gekose is nie en met die skoolhoof en personeel saamwerk. Die autoriteit van onderwyshoofde is verontagsaam en kontrole oor die skoolsituasie is dikwels oorgeneem. Konflik en onderbrekings het gevolg.

Die leefwêreld van die studenteleiers en hulle volgelinge is gekenmerk aan armoede, voorbevolking, werkloosheid en politieke onstabiliteit. Hulle het in 'n gemeenskap met min etiese waarde groetgeword, wat aanleiding tot magteloosheid en frustrasie gee het. Hierdie negatiewe faktore het moontlik negatiewe gedrag en houdings tot gevolg gehad, wat hulle nie vir die eise van die gemeenskap toegerus het nie. Die onderwys is hiervoor die skuld gegee en skole het 'n uitlaatklep vir frustrasie geword. Uit hierdie studie het dit geblyk dat studenteleiers in tradisioneel swart skole nie oor positiewe leierseisakkappe beskik nie.

In hoofstuk vier is gepoog om leierseisakkappe wat nodig is vir sinvolle onderwysdoelstelling te bespreek. Dit is noodsaaklik dat gemeenskapsleiers,
bestuursliggame, en ander belanghebbendes positiewe leierskap onder studenteleiers sal bevorder.

In die lig van die literatuurstudie is die volgende aanbevelings gemaak:

* Dat proaktiewe bemagtigingsprogramme ingestel word waardeur ouers, die gemeenskap, onderwysers en onderwysowerhede die waardigheid en waarde sisteem van die onderwysstelsel herstel, om sodoende die probleme wat deur swart studenteleiers en hul volgelinge ondevind word, aan te spreek.

* Die instelling van ondersteunings — en voorligtingstelsels waardeur opvoeders, die onderwysowerhede en die staat studenteleiers en hul volgelinge help om die probleme van hul sosiale-en psigologiese verlede te verwerk.

* Die instelling van leierskapprogramme om studente toe te rus met leierskapvaardighede soos onderhandeling, probleemoplossing, besluitneming, kommunikasies en konflikhantering (leierskap simposiums, seminare en ander soortgelyke projekte ten einde).
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CHAPTER 1

1 ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In South Africa black student leaders and their followers evolved from the context of apartheid education with its concomitant unequal allocation of facilities, disparity in the provision of the per capita expenditure, overcrowded classrooms and an inferior education system. Black students came from the background of poverty, unemployment, political violence and repression. Le Roux (1993:31) asserts that, education is entrenched in the social environment and it is factors within that environment that shape it. Schools in a traditionally black environment functioned without social workers, student counsellors and school psychologists to attend to youth problems. Students came to school with a particular social consciousness which ultimately affected their academic activity (Möller, 1992:411).

The emergence of a democratically elected government and the establishment of a single integrated system of education in South Africa unveiled a great need among student leaders, particularly in traditionally black schools, to discard the practices of the past and adopt new approaches. After the Soweto uprisings in 1976, protest and resistance to oppression were the preoccupation of student leaders. The deteriorating relationship between student leaders and educational authorities assumed a confrontational dimension which culminated in the call by student leaders that 1986 should be declared as the year of no schooling. It can be assumed that student leaders and their followers regarded schooling as "a pedagogic emergency situation as a place of failure and revenge" (Le Roux, 1993:36).
The concept "authority" was totally obliterated in schools (Möller, 1992:43). Disruption in school, unrest and the call by the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) for school boycotts, became a prominent phenomenon. Schools were turned into battlefields and sites for political struggle (Morrow, 1988:247). Disruptive tendencies among students manifested themselves to the extent that student leaders and their followers became unruly, demoralised and aggressive towards their fellow-students (Nxumalo, 1993:1).

Student leaders were organised into a formidable power block, under the directive of their national leadership, the Congress of South African Students (COSAS). The organisation was founded in 1979 and banned in 1985 (Nkomo, 1990:126). Central to the unrest in schools was, inter alia, a demand by students for the constitution of democratically elected Student Representative Councils (SRCs). Students perceived SRCs as the structure which articulated their aspirations. They questioned the existence of a prefect system. Black students alleged that the prefect leadership structure was not composed of elected students, but was a body which received authority from the principal and staff (Ashley, 1989:49).

The anomaly with the emergence of SRCs was that the relationship between student leaders and principals degenerated. The interaction within the school environment between the student leaders and school authorities was fraught with emotional reaction and irrationality. Moreover, the Department of Education was not prepared to recognise SRCs on the basis of the fact that they were potentially a political student structure. This was evidenced by the deployment of the South African Defence Force in schools and townships in an effort to curb violence. However, there was a strong perception that SRCs were targeted for harassment and detention, thus perpetuating the climate of violence (Christie, 1991:268-269).

The principal was the first to bear the brunt when students in reaction to apartheid repression developed militancy and emotional aggression. Mhlambo (1993:4) confirms that there are cases where principals were murdered by students.
1.2 ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

Black students as they operated under the directives and guidance of COSAS demanded the democratisation of their leadership structure. The concept democracy became their catchword. Once constituted, the SRCs began to renegotiate their relationship with the school authorities. In the name of democracy, student leaders would interrupt or disrupt academic programmes to address societal problems (Unterhalter, Volpe, Botha, Badat, Khotseng, 1991:134). Students are a majority in schools. At the time of their 'struggle', their behaviour and attitude implied that the concerns of students transcended the adherence to normal teaching and learning activities. Student leaders would easily extract concession from the principal persuading him to make institutional alterations and adaptations to accommodate the wishes of the majority (Unterhalter et al., 1991:134). Student leaders used student power to effect change within and beyond the school context. The challenge for the principal was that some of the demands made by students to him and his staff fell beyond the parameters of his power (Van der Westhuizen & Steyn, 1991:32). The crucial fact was that students were conscious of their power. They used this power to shape the course of events in school. The dilemma in schools was exacerbated by the fact that the education system, and particularly principals and staff, resisted the very strong demands for changes. The lack of trust between students and the authorities prevented the latter from taking a hand in transferring responsibility to students for the direction the schools took. Instead, the principal regarded the growing authority and power of student leaders as a constraint towards the implementation of educational policies.

The notion existed, and still exists, that schools cannot function as democratic institutions, and that shared decision-making leads to ambiguities of power, making every staff member unsure and uncomfortable. In this regard, Möller (1992:413-414) explicitly states that all educative participants need to be democratically
involved in decision-making processes. To endorse this argument, The Draft White Paper on Education and Training (1994:12) explicitly states that "the principle of democratic governance should increasingly be reflected in every level of the system, by the involvement in consultation and appropriate forms of decision-making of elected representatives of the main stakeholders, interest groups and role players".

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem that will be investigated in this study concerns student leadership in black schools. In essence, this study attempts to find answers to the following:

* Are student leaders in black schools equipped with the necessary skills and techniques required of them in order to participate meaningfully as leaders in the school situation?

* What is the nature of the life-world of student leaders in black schools?

1.4 ELUCIDATION OF CONCEPTS

For the sake of clarity, it is essential that certain pertinent concepts be properly defined.

1.4.1 Leadership

Cawood, (1989:14) define leadership as the function of a group or team in which skills are utilised in a given situation. For the purpose of this study leadership has been viewed as the ability to formulate, accept and realise group or team goals and objectives, blend together and develop the group or team, satisfy individual needs
and create outlets for individual expertise to the benefit of both team and individual.

1.4.2 **Student-leader**

A student is a person who is engaged in learning. Presently they are referred to as learners. Students are elected to become leaders because they have a certain role to play and specific tasks and responsibilities to execute (Cawood, 1989:3). They serve as a very important link in the authority-structure of the school (Vorster, 1995:2).

1.4.3 **Black schools**

In the past some schools in South Africa were historically black, while others were historically white. Today most of the schools, particularly in large urban centres, are changing their composition and they have become multi-cultural and multi-racial. In the townships schools still reflect the trends of the past in terms of racial composition as most of the schools in the townships are one hundred percent black in terms of student composition.

The term "black schools" refers to those educational institutions that are predominantly African in composition. Students who attend these schools are from an African background. "The reference to race and its accompanying distinctions is still necessary during the process of transition to acknowledge the experiences and identify the problems of pupils who have grown up in a country controlled by apartheid laws" (Du Toit, 1995:212).

1.4.4 **Life-world**

According to Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg (1988:141) every person lives in his or her own life-world. A person's life-world means everything that
has meaning to him or her. Not only the person's geographical world, but all relationships with the self, objects, ideas, people and God. According to Vrey (1993:15) the Gestalt of meaningful relationships may be interdependent and interactive; they are also dynamic and ever increasing and changing. A person’s behaviour and actions should be interpreted within the context of his or her life-world — all to which a person has attributed significance and therefore understands. The above theory forms the foundation on which the study is based.

1.5 AIMS OF THIS RESEARCH

The aims of this research are:

* To pursue a relevant literature study of the life-world of the student leader in black schools.

* To provide certain recommendations and guidelines so that accountable support can be rendered to student leaders in black schools.

1.6 RESEARCH PROCEDURE

Research with regard to this study was conducted by means of a literature study of relevant research material.

1.7 FURTHER COURSE OF THIS STUDY

In this chapter, problems and methods of research were dealt with. Some relevant concepts were elucidated. A further course of the study is as follows:

In Chapter 2 the theories and styles of leadership are discussed.

Chapter 3 focuses on the life-world of the student leader.
Chapter 4 deals with accountable student leadership and leadership skills.

Finally, Chapter 5 provides a summary and recommendations in respect of this study.

1.8 SUMMARY

An expiation of the problem, statement of the problem and the aims of this study are given in this chapter. The method of research was explained and certain relevant concepts are elucidated. Finally the further course of this study is set out.

The next chapter will focus on leadership theories and styles.
CHAPTER 2

THEORIES AND STYLES OF LEADERSHIP

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2.6 SUMMARY
CHAPTER 2

THEORIES AND STYLES OF LEADERSHIP

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter attention will be given to leadership theories and leadership styles in terms of leader behaviour. A brief overview of research studies on leadership will also be presented. The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the theories of leadership and to identify various leadership styles that inform leadership practice.

According to Bernhard & Walsh (1990:52) theory and style are totally distinct concepts. Theory is defined as a scientifically acceptable general principle that informs practice or is an attempt to explain observable facts (Bernhard & Walsh, 1990:52). On the other hand, style refers to the manner in which a practice is performed. Hersey & Blanchard (1993:289) refer to leadership style as "the behaviour pattern that a person exhibits when attempting to influence the activities of others - as perceived by those others". They are an outcome of a combination of the situation and experience as well as the personality of the leader (Matsei, 1990:2).

2.2 LEADERSHIP

According to Mariner-Tomey (1993:4), the concept leadership was not known in the English language until the first half of the nineteenth century. Although the term leadership is relatively new to the English language, there are as many definitions of leadership as there are writers who have endeavoured to define the concept. Be that as it may, there is no one definition broad enough to cover the leadership process (Mariner-Tomey, 1993:5). Cawood (1989:14) asserts that attempts to define leadership portray a variety of philosophies and an array of opinions.
What emerges in the definitions of the leadership concept is that it is a dynamic, interactive process that involves three dimensions, namely the leader, the follower and the situation. Each of these dimensions reciprocally impacts on one another. According to Hersey & Blanchard (1993:93) leadership is an activity of influencing people to strive willingly for group objectives.

Hellriegel & Slocum (1989:465) define leadership as an ability to influence, inspire and direct the actions of a person or group toward attaining desired objectives. Mhlambo (1993:17) refers to leadership as the process of influencing the activities and behaviour of an individual or a group in efforts towards goal achievement in a given situation. Mariner-Tomey (1993:5) defines leadership in terms of a focus for group process, personality and its effects, the art of inducing compliance, the exercise of influence, a behaviour or act, a form of persuasion, a power relation, an instrument of goal achievement, an emerging effect of interaction, a differentiated role and the initiation of structure.

A radical definition cited, asserts that leadership is often a transformational process. The transformational leader heightens group members' motivation, confidence, and satisfaction by inviting members and changing their beliefs, values and needs (Forsyth, 1990:216). Moorhead & Griffin (1995:297) views leadership in terms of both process and property. As a process leadership entails the use of non-coercive influence to direct and coordinate the activities of group members toward goal accomplishment. As a property leadership is the set of characteristics attributed to those who are perceived to use such influence successfully. Bernhard & Walsh (1990:65) on the other hand look at leadership as an inter-personal relation in which power and influence are unevenly distributed, so that one person is able to direct and control the actions and behaviours of others to a greater extent than they direct and control his.
Reading from various definitions mentioned it can be assumed that leadership process is a function of the leader, the follower and other situational variables which reciprocally impact on one another. Leadership can also be viewed as an influence process. Furthermore leadership involves the exercise of influence on the part of the leader over the behaviour of one or more other people. This implies that leadership involves one individual (the leader) consciously attempting to get other individuals (the followers) to do something that he wants them to do.

The study of leadership is an endeavour to comprehend how a leader comes to have influence over the thoughts, feelings and actions of followers. The focus is therefore on the nature of the leader, the nature of followers, the organisational situation or the leader’s behaviour that results in the leader’s capacity to influence followers.

The nature of student leadership in traditionally black schools in South Africa, and particularly since 1976, was that it was imbued with activism. The whole leadership practice was therefore dysfunctional. Student leaders were an authority unto themselves. They were not accountable to education authorities nor to parents. Student leadership was not founded on educational relationship but on power relationship. This manifested in negative power relationship. Student leaders therefore used this power to achieve objectives which were not of educational benefit, but that were of benefit to the aspirations of the few individuals. This form of leadership led to the degeneration of the culture of learning and teaching. Discipline and order in schools was totally eroded. Chaotic school culture became the order of the day. Accountability was eventually obliterated. Involvement with student activism rather than the attainment of school goals and objectives preoccupied the black student leaders.

It is against this background that it is argued that student leaders should be exposed to leadership theories. The following revelation of theories will serve this
purpose. Reading from the various definitions cited, it can be assumed that the leadership process is a function of the leader, the follower and other situational variables which reciprocally influences one another (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993:93).

2.3 LEADERSHIP THEORIES

Leadership theories show the nature and history of leadership ideas (Mariner-Tomey, 1993:9). Most leadership theories attempt to explain leadership and serve as guidelines to identify leaders. The leadership concept is focused at from divergent theoretical orientations. Theories that are highlighted in this study are trait, situational, contingency and group function theories.

2.3.1 Trait theory

The trait theorists focus on the personality of a leader. The theory is based on the premise that the leader is endowed with special attributes or characteristics that make him superior to the followers. These theorists seek to identify these traits or qualities. The assumption based on this theory is that not all individuals have these leadership characteristics or traits, but those in possession of them can be considered potential leaders. It is against this background that the value of training individuals to assume leadership positions is questioned. Leadership training can only be appropriate to those with inherent leadership traits (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993:997).

Early theorists who subscribed to trait approach, believed that once the hereditary characteristics that make the leader superior have been identified, they can be singled out and studied. The traits mentioned, inter alia, are intelligence, scholarship, dependability, social participation and socio-economic status (Bernhard & Walsh, 1990:540).
Trait theory can only be appreciated for having aroused an inspiration towards further research on leadership. Some of the present writers regard this theory as a failure. To confirm this, the following argument is presented: "The old assumption that 'leaders are born' has been discredited completely, and the premise that certain leader traits are absolutely necessary for effective leadership, has never been substantiated in several decades of trait research. Today there is a more balanced viewpoint about traits. It is now recognised that certain traits increase the likelihood that a leader will be effective, but they do not guarantee effectiveness, and the relative importance of different traits is dependent upon the nature of the leadership situation" (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993:97-98).

2.3.2 Situation theory

"The situational theory of leadership evolved primarily as a reaction to the failure of the traitist approach" (Bernhard & Walsh, 1990:54). This statement serves to indicate that a leader is not a special person blessed with particular personality characteristics. In terms of the situation theorists, a combination of the following variables determines leader effectiveness: the unique nature of the situation, the nature of a particular constituent group and the goals of the group (Cawood, 1989:34). Situational approaches further examine the interplay of the main components of the leadership process, which are the leader, the follower and the situation. The interaction of these variables enables the situational theorists to determine the causal relationship that will lead to the predictability of behaviour (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993:117).

2.3.3 Contingency theory

According to Fiedler & Garcia (1988:18) the contingency model addresses the question why particular leaders perform better than others in identical leadership situations.
In terms of this theory, the effectiveness of the leader is determined by the interaction between the personality of the leader and the demands dictated by the situation (Mariner-Tomey, 1993:11). Three major variables are identified, which determine whether a particular situation is favourable to leaders (Moorhead & Griffin, 1995:305). They are:

* Personal relations with the members of their group (leader-member relations). This is based on the extent to which members trust, respect and have confidence in their leader and vice-versa. A high degree of mutual trust, respect and confidence shows a healthy leader-member relationship and a low degree demonstrates poor leader-member relations (Moorhead & Griffin, 1995:305).

* The degree of task structure that their group has been assigned to perform (task structure). Moorhead & Griffin (1995:305-306) identify four components as related to task structure. They are goal-path multiplicity, decision verifiability, decision specificity and goal clarity. Tasks that have low multiplicity and high verifiability, specificity and clarity are regarded as structured. On the other hand tasks that have high multiplicity and low verifiability, specificity and clarity are unstructured. Structured tasks are routine, easily understood and unambiguous. Unstructured tasks are non-routine, ambiguous and complex. The contingency theory presumes that structured tasks are favourable because the leader need not be closely involved in defining activities and can direct energy to other matters instead of guiding and directing the activities of the members as is the case in unstructured tasks.

* Power and authority that the position provides (position power). According to Hersey & Blanchard (1993:119), power is inherent in the leader’s role itself. If the leader has power to assign work, reward and punish members, the position power is high and favourable. If the leader is
unable to give rewards and punishment and has no control over members, position power is low and unfavourable.

Fiedler's model propagates a single continuum of leader behaviour, suggesting that there are only two leader behaviour styles, that is, task-oriented and relationship-oriented. Task-oriented leaders can probably be effective in situations that are most favourable or less favourable to them as leaders. The relationship-oriented leaders perform best in conditions of uncertainty (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993:120). It can be asserted that these leaders can be categorised among the high-and-low-least-preferred co-worker leaders in terms of follower interpretation. The high-Least Preferred Co-worker (high-LPC) leader lays emphasis on establishing and maintaining satisfying interpersonal relations within the group context. The low-Least Preferred Co-worker (low-LPC) leader prioritises the successful completion of a task (Forsyth, 1990:234).

2.3.4 Group function theory

The group function theory advocates group formation and group dynamics. Leadership in terms of this theory is defined in relation to group functions and group goals (Cawood, 1989:35). Leadership is then associated with the group and not with a particular person.

2.4 LEADERSHIP STYLES

The leadership styles are the reflection of the nature of control a leader uses in relating to members of a group. They are found within the leader, within the group members and within the situation (Bernhard & Walsh, 1990:55). Cawood (1989:29) asserts that the concept leadership style is determined by the manner in which the leader's followers observe and experience the leader's behaviour and his action. The behaviour is not apparent in an isolated situation or case, but is generally observed over time. It stands to reason therefore that leadership style
stems from what the leader does and the leader's activities, how he takes decisions and how these decisions are related to or communicated with followers. The leader's use of leadership styles is dependent on his internal forces which are based on his value system, degree of confidence in group members, degree of comfort in the leadership role, and feelings of security in uncertain situations (Bernhard & Walsh, 1990:56). Leadership styles can be presented as follows:

2.4.1 Traditional leadership styles

(1) Autocratic leadership

According to Cawood (1989:3) the autocratic leadership is leader-centred. The leader determines the course of events for the group. Methods of goal attainment and policies for the group are formulated by the leader alone. The leader is ever aloof from the group. This style of leadership is at times called coercive leadership or dictatorship (Musaazi, 1991:63). "Autocratic leadership presupposes followers who are subordinates and a leader who is a ruler and an authoritarian" (Cawood, 1989:31). This leader takes no input from the members in terms of decisions made about group activities.

In schools where the student leader engages in this style of leadership, followers are not given the opportunity to be involved in discussion or exchange of views. Even the principal who denies students the right to have a say in all matters relating to their school life, practises an autocratic style of leadership. This style of leadership stifles initiative among students and often leads to school riots and strikes (Musaazi, 1991:63).

(2) Democratic leadership

Forsyth (1990:241) asserts that the democratic leader allows group members to take decisions relating to work projects and further stimulates the development of
an egalitarian atmosphere. The democratic leadership style is group-centred. The leader gives the group members an opportunity to decide and formulate policy. Group members under this style of leadership have freedom to choose actions and instructions that would facilitate the work. The democratic leader "leads by discussing and consulting and procuring group decisions" (Cawood, 1989:31). The leader holds the view that his or her group members are responsible and motivated people who are able to commit themselves to creative tasks of their own initiative. Communication is a two-way process in this style. The leader is endowed with power and authority which he derives from his followers. The leader consults and delegates responsibility to followers. This is done with the clear-cut understanding that the final decision rests with the leader (Musaazi, 1991:64).

Within the school situation this implies that the principal, students and teachers participate in the determination of school policy as well as its implementation. Democratic leadership enhances group productivity. Personalities shaped by this style of leadership engage in dialogue, healthy debates and hence become less aggressive (Musaazi, 1991:64).

(3) **Laissez-faire**

The *laissez-faire* leadership style gives individual members of the group complete freedom. This leadership style is individual-centred, that is, individuals make all the decisions on their own without interference from the leader. Cawood (1989:32) asserts that *laissez-faire* leadership is a super-democratic leadership style where the leader virtually disappears from the scene and leads by acting on good faith by trusting and relying on the individual followers' loyalty and devotion to the cause. *Laissez-faire* leader groups are low in productivity, satisfaction and cohesiveness (Bernhard & Walsh, 1990:57). To confirm this argument, Cawood (1989:32) claims that the style of *laissez-faire* leadership is based on the following
statement: "I shall not be there to give orders or to be consulted. You will be on your own and will have to decide for yourself what to say and do. I shall rely on your understanding our cause and your will to serve it." This implies that student leaders may rely on students to control the cause of events without some form of intervention. The situation of control under this state of affairs in school degenerates and results in chaos and anarchy.

(4) The six classic styles

Lewin, Lippit & Whyte (Cawood, 1989:30) identify six classic leadership styles. These are nomothetic, idiographic, transactional altruistic, charismatic and bureaucratic leadership styles. The nomothetic leader is more concerned about the task or goals of the group. The nomothetic leader emphasises the needs of the institution. The realisation and satisfaction of the institutional needs supersede everything else to the leader (Musaazi, 1991:65). Idiographic leadership lays emphasis on the well-being of the individual and the group. The leader is people-oriented. Cawood (1989:30) state that transactional leadership is a synthesis of the styles mentioned above, that is, nomothetic and idiographic. It is only applied relatively depending on a particular situation. The altruistic leader focuses on the needs and well-being of others. He is unselfish. He does not take decisive actions because he fears hurting his followers. The concept of charismatic leader originated from Weber's 1921 paper in which he coined the word charisma and leader (Baron & Byrne, 1991:469). Charisma is a Greek word, which means divine gift. The charismatic leader attracts loyal followers and has power over them. Baron & Byrne (1991:469) claim that "charisma is largely the result of specific patterns of behaviour on the part of the leader's patterns, that in turn generate specific attributions about them, among followers". The bureaucratic leader strictly adheres to the rules and regulations. He operates from the office. He relies on paperwork to administer the situation.
2.5 NEW APPROACHES TO UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP

The early twentieth century leadership theorists such as Taylor, Fayol and Mayo (Cawood, 1989:35) respectively emphasised either task or relationship dimension in their study of leadership. Their insights and visions contributed towards the rich legacy of modern leadership. Their outlook on leadership is regarded as a one-dimension approach. This one-dimension approach was replaced with a two-dimension or continuum approach, which is regarded as more realistic and complex. Researchers who contributed towards bringing about this new dimension in leadership will be discussed.

2.5.1 Tannenbaum and Schmidt's approach

Tannenbaum and Schmidt (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993:119) added a new dimension to leadership. They indicated the significance of the external environment and the interdependence between the organisation or group and its people. This approach is regarded as more sophisticated and broadly encompassing. These theories suggest that the interrelationship among leader, follower and situation has become increasingly complex. "With this complexity it becomes more difficult to identify causes and effect, particularly when more forces outside the traditional situation are exerting influence" (Hersey & Blanchard, 1991:119). This approach indicates that the leader makes decisions and presents them to the group. The leader sells the decision. The followers are expected to respond to the tentative decisions presented to them and so make contributions. Followers are allowed to function freely within the scope determined by the leader (Cawood, 1989:36).

2.5.2 McGregor's theory X and theory Y

McGregor formulated his continuum theory on leadership and motivation as follows: theory X is premised on the notion that followers or subordinates in a
group are intrinsically lazy and unreliable and that they are without ambition. Since they are not prepared to work, they are not motivated by higher order needs, but only by physical and security needs (Cawood, 1989:36). The democratic style assumes that the power of leaders is given to them by the group that they lead, but in this case followers need to be forcefully channelled in goal-directed activities. The assumption is that followers are inherently self-centred, resist change and are gullible (Miner, 1988:368).

Theory Y assumes that followers regard work as play and that they are self-directed. They willingly engage in goal-directed activity. They derive satisfaction through commitment to goals. The motivation, potential for development, the capacity for responsibility and readiness to support organisational goals are inherent in the followers (Miner, 1988:368).

2.5.3 Likert’s approach

Likert and his associates at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan conducted an extensive research on leadership (Cawood, 1989:36). Likert’s research reflects that leadership can be presented on a continuum from system 1 (absolutely autocratic) to system 4 (absolutely democratic). System 1 reveals that leaders do not trust their followers and do not involve them in decision-making. Followers are forced by threat and punishment (Cawood, 1989:37). In system 4, the leader shows complete trust in the followers’ capabilities (Miner, 1988:372). Decision-making is decentralised and responsibilities are evenly distributed among group members.

In summary the four basic styles or systems of leadership identified by Likert are the following: Exploitative-authoritative, benevolent-authoritative, consultative-democratic and participative-democratic (Swansburg, 1990:355).
2.5.4 John Adair's approach

Adair's views on leadership are rooted on a three-dimensional approach. He identified three areas of leadership practices which on the one hand function exclusively and on the other hand reciprocally interact with one another. The three areas are the following (Cawood, 1989:38):

* The requirements of the specific tasks or goals of the organisation or group.
* The needs and skills of the group.
* The needs and skills of the individual.

The implication of the above dimensions on leadership is that if the task is well executed it will affect the group's morale and cohesiveness. Moreover, it can satisfy the needs of the individuals. On the other hand, the absence of team cohesion can impact negatively on task efficiency and thus it becomes detrimental to individual needs (Cawood, 1989:38). All these dimensions are interrelated and they also impact on one another.

2.5.5 Ohio State University approach

A team of researchers from Ohio State University conducted an extensive inquiry into the area of leadership. They relate leadership to a quadrant with two distinct categories. These categories are consideration and initiating structure (Arnold & Feldman, 1986:125; Cawood, 1989:39; Moorhead & Griffin, 1995:301). Consideration for students or followers means friendliness, mutual trust, appreciation, warmth, recognition of subordinates, open communication, supportiveness and representation of subordinates (Cawood, 1989:39; Arnold & Feldman, 1986:125).
Initiating structure refers to the extent to which the leader is task-oriented and concerned with utilising resources and personnel effectively in order to accomplish group goals. The leader who engages in initiating structure dimension is involved with planning, coordinating, directing, problem-solving, clarifying subordinate roles, criticising poor work and pressurising subordinates to perform more effectively (Arnold & Feldman, 1986:125; Cawood, 1989:39).

The four basic leader behaviour quadrants are known as a leadership grid and are labelled as follows: high task and high relationship; high relationship and low task; low relationship and high task and low relationship and low task. This serves to identify an array of possible leader behaviour combinations. The developers of the leadership grid intended to portray types of leadership behaviour and their various potential combinations (Cawood, 1989:38-39; Moorhead & Griffin, 1995:303). The qualitative leadership of leader behaviour, which is represented by each among the four quadrants, is as follows (Cawood, 1989:39):

* Quadrant 1: Very effective leadership.

* Quadrant 2: Very friendly and humane, but not effectively goal-oriented leadership.

* Quadrant 3: Chaotic and ineffective leadership.

* Quadrant 4: A slave-driver who forgets that team members are with him in the same endeavour.

This approach provided researchers with several basic insights into basic leadership processes. The shortcoming of this leadership style is that it failed to meet its primary goal which was to identify universal leader behaviour-follower response patterns and relationship (Moorhead & Griffin, 1995:304).
2.5.6 Blake & Mouton's approach

These researchers presented a two-dimensional model which is known as the managerial grid. Dimensions of this managerial thinking as reflected on the managerial grid, entail a concern for people which appears on the horizontal axis and concern for production which is depicted on the vertical axis. On each axis a scale is designed ranging from 1 to 9. The purpose of this scale is to measure the degree of concern (Hodgetts, 1990:512). Blake & Mouton, according to Cawood (1989:39), identified five distinct leadership styles. They are presented as follows:

* (1,9) People-oriented leadership: concern for task (production or goals) is not his prime concern and the leader’s efforts are primarily to avoid conflict and to maintain sound human relations.

* (9,1) Task-oriented leadership: followers are considered as mere commodities. The leader decides, plans and controls singularly.

* (1,1) Impoverished leadership: this is a total lack of concern for both task and people.

* (5,5) Leadership by compromise: this is a typical middle-of-the-road approach. Both dimensions are receiving attention, but there are no signs of excellence in the leadership.

* (9,9) Optimal task/people-oriented leadership: the perfect leader behaviour in which accomplishment is the result of optimal integration of high task and high people orientation.
2.5.7 Multi-dimensional approach to leadership

The one- or two-dimensional approach to leadership, which includes the quadrant model, has been exposed during the last two decades to be having limitations. Contemporary theories show that leadership cannot be fully explicated in terms of one-dimension, two-dimension (or continuum) or even a quadrant approach. The reason presented is that these pioneering theories did not take note of the complex varying leadership situations (Cawood, 1989:40).

The contemporary theorists of leadership are united in their view that a multi-dimensional contingency approach should be followed in which situational variables are viewed as having a direct impact on leadership behaviour.

2.5.8 Hersey & Blanchard's situation leadership model

Hersey and Blanchard (Cawood, 1989:41) developed the leadership effectiveness model having been influenced by the contributions of the Ohio model and by that of William Reddin. From the two-dimension model presented by the abovementioned researcher, Hersey and Blanchard added an effectiveness dimension. They stressed that the effectiveness of leaders is determined by the extent to which the leader's style interrelates with the situation in which the leader operates (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993:129). The following illustration serves to highlight the effective dimension (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993:129):
With the addition of an effectiveness dimension to the task behaviour and relationship behaviour dimension of the Ohio State leadership model, Hersey and Blanchard ((Hersey & Blanchard, 1993:129) claimed that they were attempting in the Tri-Dimensional Leader Effectiveness Model to combine the idea of leader style with situational variables of a particular environment. When the leader's style is well adapted to a given situation, it is referred to as effective. When the leader's style is not adaptable to a given situation, then that style is referred to as ineffective (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993:130).

If the assumption that the effectiveness of a leader behaviour style is directly dependent on the situation in which it is used is confirmed, then it stands to reason...
that the basic styles may be effective or ineffective, depending on the situation. Hersey & Blanchard (1993:130) emphasise in their theory that the third dimension is the environment. The degree of effectiveness of the leader's style is determined by the interaction between the leadership style and the environment. This degree of effectiveness can be represented on a continuum. The continuum reflects ineffectiveness to vary between 0 and -4 and effectiveness to vary between 0 and +4 in the opposite direction (Cawood, 1989:42). The following diagram illustrates the division of the effectiveness dimension into quartiles:

Figure 2: The division of the effectiveness dimension into quartiles.

(Hersey & Blanchard, 1993:131)
The four basic styles reflected in the illustration (figure 2) can be applied with differing degrees of effectiveness. At one extreme of the continuum, the leader's style is ineffective, depending on the nature and context of the leader's specific style in a specific situation. It is not possible to generally identify a list of environmental factors for all leadership situations, since a number of factors are unique to a particular environment. The "leader effectiveness" is the result of the leader's application of a style which synchronises or is in harmony with the requirements as set by the situation (Cawood, 1989:43). In the case of a student leader, the following environmental factors, among others, impact on the leader's style (Cawood, 1989:44):

* Followers (team members).
* Colleagues (fellow SRC members).
* Institutional requirements (group tradition and group morale).
* Task requirements (team or group goals).
* Other environmental variables (school play, traditions, social, economic and political dynamics).

Since followers are also viewed as an environmental factor, they can be approached from the following perspective: maturity or readiness of followers as determinant situational variable of student leadership style. Two dimensions of maturity can be identified, i.e. task maturity (ability) and psychological maturity (willingness). Task maturity means the followers' ability to perform a particular task. This depends on the followers' knowledge, experience and skill in performing a specific task and also on their level of education and training in the specific area. Psychological maturity refers to the followers' willingness or motivational level to perform a specific task, which entails self-confidence and commitment (Cawood, 1989:44). The concepts ability and willingness may carry different meanings, but the fact is that they are an interacting influence system, which means that a significant change in one will affect the whole (Hersey &
Blanchard, 1993:190). It can be argued that the extent to which followers bring their willingness to a specific situation, will affect their use of ability. Hence it affects the extent to which they grow and develop competence and ability. In the same breath, the amount of knowledge, experience and skill brought to a particular task definitely affects competence, commitment and motivation.

To achieve a specific task or goal, followers need to develop readiness levels which are the different combinations of ability and willingness.

2.6 SUMMARY

Leadership includes theories such as the trait, situation, contingency and group function theories. In the same breath, leadership theories cannot be separated from the leadership styles. Leadership style refers to the way in which followers observe and experience the leader's behaviour and actions. The leadership styles discussed in this chapter included, inter alia, the three traditional leadership styles and six classic leadership styles. The traditional leadership styles discussed were the autocratic, democratic and the laissez-faire leadership styles. The six classic leadership styles entailed the nomothetic, idiographic, transactional, altruistic, charismatic and bureaucratic leadership styles.

In addition an exposition to the new approaches to understanding leadership was made. This was done in order to create a clear picture of the contributions made by the early and modern theorists towards creating a new insight into and vision of leadership. The approaches discussed were the Tannenbaum and Schmidt’s approach, McGregor’s theory X and theory Y, Likert’s approach, John Adair’s approach, Ohio State University’s approach, Blake & Mouton’s approach, the Multi-dimensional approach and Hersey & Blanchard’s approach.

The student leaders’ inability to interpret and comprehend the theories and styles of leadership can be viewed against their disadvantaged background. The next chapter will therefore focus on student leaders’ life-world.
CHAPTER 3

THE LIFE-WORLD OF THE STUDENT LEADER IN THE BLACK SCHOOLS

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CHAPTER 3

THE LIFE-WORLD OF THE STUDENT LEADER IN BLACK SCHOOLS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a dynamic and interactive process which involves a leader, follower and the situation. Within the school situation the student leader interacts with, inter alia, the principal, deputy principal, the departmental heads, the governing body, students, parents and other members of the community who form part of the entire school milieu which eventually constitutes an intricate network of human relationship. The interpersonal and human relations eventually pervade every sphere of student leadership interaction and transaction.

Since leadership is always observed in terms of specific situations in relation to people, objects/ideas and moral and religious values, student leadership will be discussed in terms of these relations.

3.2 EXPERIENCE AND LIFE-WORLD OF STUDENT LEADERS

3.2.1 Experience

What is noteworthy about experience is that all people experience things in one way or another. Experiencing and consciousness are for all intents and purposes the same thing. According to Mhlambo (1993:40) and Urbani (1982:33), consciousness can be traced back to two basic forms, that is, feelings and thoughts. These concepts are ways of expressing a common experience of reality (Fraser, Laubser & Van Rooy, 1992:66; Vrey, 1993:39-42).
In studying the experience of student leaders, the focus will be on looking specifically for the state of these persons' affective world of experience, their cognitive world of experience and how they give meaning to this experience. In this regard we are concerned with the relation between affective and cognitive experiences, or the stability, order and control in a person's cognitive and affective experiences (Sonnekus, 1985:60, Mhlambo, 1993:47).

Experiencing things is a way of giving meaning to the world around us and this can be effected at three different levels: affective, cognitive and normative (Mhlambo, 1993:47; Abhilak, 1994:140). In describing experience in the life-world of the student leader, the following is meant (Mhlambo, 1993:47; Urbani, 1982:34): "Experiencing things is a way of expressing oneself through which something essential, that is, one's life-world becomes manifest. In other words, without experiencing, one's life-world cannot be built up. It cannot be comprehended or understood at all. It is through the (student leader's) numerous experiences of reality that his own unique life-world comes into being."

In order to understand the student leader's experience, this study will have to focus on his relationship with himself, others, objects, ideas and God.

3.2.2 Family influence on the life-world of the student leader

Kusel (1990:11); Olivier (1989:324); Netshiombo (1994:44) and MacLeod (1993:38) all cite the following characteristics of the life-world of the black youth, and particularly that of the black student leader:

* The black youth are angry, brutish, psychopathic, malicious and unforgiving.

* The exposure of children to outrages in the township has resulted in adoptive behaviour patterns.
* They show signs of social, physical, spiritual, moral and mental experiences of brutalization.

* Many of those who have experienced and lived with violence are psychologically bruised and have come to accept violence as a way of life and an appropriate means of conflict resolution.

Van Niekerk & Meier (1995:69) further emphasise that black students in South Africa have been brought up in a culture of poverty and violence in which the feelings of security and values such as respect for life, authority, other people and people's property cannot develop.

The poor socio-economic status of most of the families of black student leaders tends to contribute towards the degeneration of their moral standards. The nature and extent of normative upbringing provided by parents, affect student leaders' becoming, learning and self-concept (Ferreira & Mathibe, 1993:3). Glanz & Pretorius (1991:103) state that the family is regarded as the basic socialising agent in the preparation of the child for adulthood. It is within these parameters that morals, values and norms are transmitted from parent to child. The black student leader's historical background indicates that the family was not always able to transmit values to him or her. The black families often experience hardship surviving under adverse, oppressive and discriminatory conditions. The outside experiences also impact on the family, causing tension among family members (Everatt, 1994:84-85).

According to Everatt (1994:84), many black youths have experienced high levels of family stress during childhood, sometimes resulting in domestic violence. Marital discord, spouse-beating, discontinuity in parenting, physical or sexual abuse, neglect and witnessing alcohol abuse by a parent may be relatively common experiences that young people have lived through. Under these circumstances the
home cannot provide a secure and warm environment for the black student leader's upbringing.

Van Niekerk & Meier (1995:71) state that the majority of South Africa's black youth are also caught in a self-perpetuating cycle of violence. It is the nature of this situation that makes them volatile, and as such, they react to an issue or instigation spontaneously and aggressively. They do not know how to interact and how to maintain control. They do not know how to accept responsibility for their actions and in most cases they seek authority from their peers and gangs. The gang leaders are elevated to positions of status and power (Van Niekerk & Meier, 1995:71).

Malan, Van'Zyl Slabbert, Marais, Olivier & Riordan (1995:13) state that the core family has been seriously affected by social upheavals. Many black youths are not experiencing stability of a lasting nature and what emerges is that many children only receive fragmented care. Another contributory factor is cited by Van Niekerk & Meier (1995:72), who confirm that "the lack of or difficulty of access to gardens, play spaces, parks, water, shopping facilities, health care, etc. and exposure to noise and dirt" are among the principal features of a deprived social environment, which in turn, leads to the fragmentation of care. Van Niekerk & Meier (1995:72) further state that the violence and the social milieu in which youths grow up, create a situation in which they no longer play or behave like children. Black youth play with guns. They experience gun battles from time to time. The lack of control, supervision and attention is clearly linked to teenagers' negative behaviour patterns such as alcohol and drug abuse, crime and indiscriminate and unprotected sexual activities. According to Malan et al. (1995:13) the lack of emotional ties between youths and parents often results in an increase in teenage pregnancies and births out of wedlock.

The above serves as an exposition of the black student leadership's meaningful life-world. Their function in school will be judged against this background. This
in turn will influence the relationships they form with themselves, others, ideas, values and God.

3.3 THE STUDENT LEADER'S RELATION WITH HIMSELF

3.3.1 Physical self

According to Siann and Ugwuegbu (1988:212), the meaning of corporality in human existence in general is manifested by the following:

* Human existence in the world takes place through the body.

* The body is at the same time man's means of admission to the world (also to other people and things).

* The body is the mediator between man and the world.

* Through our bodies we actively establish our own world.

Black student leaders come from a demoralising environment. According to Everatt (1994:7) they face adverse socio-economic realities. Van Niekerk & Meier (1995:73) assert that brutality, death and destruction are the harsh realities for millions of township youth. In contrast with white youth, education for black children was ravaged by turmoil. The turmoil was accompanied by the rejection of their inferior state of education. This rejection manifested itself in students' unsustained school attendance, dropping out of school, drug abuse, gang formation, breaking and burning of schools and high failure rates (Mashile & Mellet, 1996:223). Previously they were referred to as the "alienated youth" or the "lost generation" or the "marginalised youth" (Van Niekerk & Meier, 1995:69). Negative socio-economic conditions give rise to greater sexual activity,
increased prostitution and teenage pregnancies. Even AIDS thrives under these circumstances.

Student leaders are also confronted by the grim reality of black schools. According to Mashile & Mellet (1996:223) schools are dirty, defaced and school property looted by the very students these schools serve. Schools are also vulnerable to outside influence such as stay-aways, marches and violence in the township. According to Van den Aardweg (1987:175) the causes of school disturbances stem from the larger societal factors over which the school has no control. Youth participating in disturbances and violence in their community will not restrict such behaviour to outside the school. Mavhivha & Heystek (1996:7) confirm that the school and community do not function in isolation; they both form an integral part of community life. According to Van den Aardweg (1987:76), disturbances in society can be ascribed to the group’s sense of isolation, subordination, insignificance, dissatisfaction and general alienation from the dominant social structure. Students therefore come to school with a lost sense of significance. In that respect both student leaders and their followers are likely to lose a sense of human responsibility.

3.3.2 Psychic self

(1) Inadequate exploration

According to Le Roux (ed.), (1992:102-107), exploring implies a study of those aspects of reality which are relatively unknown to the child. He explores those aspects of reality which reflect both known and unknown characteristics.

Objectives of emancipation become more refined and the will to overcome his helplessness becomes a will to succeed. Exploring becomes more formal and organised and less subjective in wondering and anticipating.
The psychic life of the student leader is not adequately realised. The following factors presented by Ferreira & Mathibe (1993:2-3) contribute tremendously in this respect:

* The black student to a great extent lacks love and adequate support from parents, especially in puberty when he needs it most.

* The black student at adolescent stage is generally at loggerheads with his parents. This makes it difficult for him to emancipate and become the person he should be.

* There is a general lack of parental help with school work and this leads to a decline in cognitive development and encourages drop-outs among early adolescents.

* Due to the low socio-economic status in most families, some students work part-time to supplement family income, thus ending up as drop-outs or retarding their cognitive development.

* There is very little readiness and willingness of parents to provide (black students and their leaders) with genuine and appropriate answers to their diverse questions. This de-motivates them in their cognitive development.

Pretorius (Van Rensburg, Landman & Bodenstein, 1994:122) observes that attitudes which the child assumes in exploring his world and which he fails to personally integrate, give rise to emotional lability. If the undigested experiences increase in number, he is eventually driven into an affective no-man’s land, where he suffers from feelings such as anxiety, insecurity, helplessness, uncertainty, dependence, loneliness and inferiority.
Meaning which is not emotionally, cognitively and normatively integrated by the student leader leads to anxiety. Anxiety results in an impotence which according to Van Niekerk (1990) virtually paralyses the child. Everatt (1994:7) asserts that anxiety may be activated by marginalisation, violence and hunger. Anxiety may make the student leader feel helpless because he or she is unable to resist it. He also feels insecure. The feeling of insecurity is often revealed as a reluctance to explore, thus resulting in the inadequate actualising of his psychic life.

A child's reluctance to explore also gives proof of the fact that the volitional education, i.e. education directed at developing the child's will, has been neglected. Unwillingness to actively participate in the task of becoming an adult is rarely evidenced in an affectively stable student leader.

There are experiences that often lead to pathic unrest in the child. This often results in the student leader being labile, confused and disoriented concerning the gnostic report of experiences. Pretorius (Van Rensburg, Landman & Bodenstein, 1994:125) cites the following examples which have a particular reference to the student leader:

* The child wishes to become someone in his own right, but he is held in check and remains immature.

* He is forced to adopt an expectant attitude despite the fact that as a person, he is endowed with the initiative to create relationships.

* He desires to be accepted, yet feels rejected.

* He would like to feel worthy, but he feels inferior instead.

* He desires stability, seeks understanding, but regards himself as misunderstood.
He craves support to realise his full potential, but constantly seems to be disposed of his potentialities.

3.3.3 Aspirations and expectations

According to Schulze & Meller (1991:105-106) the educative dialogue is always a point where the subjective interpretations of an adult and a child intersect and where short circuits may occur. It is also evident that no child learns automatically. To be able to learn, a child must actively direct himself to the content emotionally and intellectually.

Gouws & Kruger (1994:45) aver that the affective mode of learning is sensing, which is also qualified as an accompanying or concomitant mode of learning. It is in the initial stage of becoming involved with the content, where the child actually becomes aware of it. When he subsequently opens up to the content in order to assimilate it into his own experiential world by means of his perceptions, thoughts, etc., he is being attentive to the content and learning it.

The student leader's fund of experience reflects a hierarchy of values and significances which reflects the way in which things have been meaningfully experienced, e.g. stable or liable in the affective sense, or cognitively organised or disorganised. Those experiences which he has not meaningfully integrated (usually manifested in terms of anxiety, uncertainty, insecurity or ignorance), constantly force themselves to awareness. In his efforts to learn, he experiences difficulties in breaking through these subjective moments of sensing, in order to focus on the material to be learned in an organised way. This is the prerequisite to remaining involved with or paying attention to the contents by way of, inter alia, perceiving and thinking (Van Niekerk, 1990:28).

It follows that the possibility always exists for affective liability to occur, resulting in a destabilisation of the sensing mode of learning, which initiates all learning and
which should accompany the cognitive modes. The child in that instance, also feels that he is unable to learn adequately. This in turn leads to an intensification of his feelings of anxiety, insecurity and ignorance. Such a condition can be envisaged as a "wall" which has arisen between the child's learning potential and his affective learning, instead of the "bridge" which normally exists when he feels secure in his lived-experience of love, acceptance, encouragement, warmth and so forth, which enables him to fully realise his learning potential (Van Niekerk, 1990:28).

The above information serves as a background to highlight the experiences that the student leader undergoes before or after assuming a leadership role, and which impact on his true potential.

3.4 STUDENT LEADERS' RELATION WITH SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

3.4.1 Student leaders' relation with parents

Student leaders' relations with their parents is a continuation of the earlier relations. The parents have authority and this effectively provides the sound basis from which the child initiates other relationships. According to Ferreira (1994:61) the authority that the students are subjected to in the parental home is characterised by freedom and discipline. Within the school situation, students have the freedom to make independent decisions and choices in a responsible manner. Authority that emanates from parents is based on moral law, existing spiritual values, fellowmen, traditions, norms and laws (Ferreira, 1994:61). It is a truism that in some traditionally black schools, the spirit of good human relations is at a low ebb (Komote & Calitz, 1992:68). Students are not interested in learning. They attend school as they wish. Parents are unable to control them. Student leaders do not exercise effective leadership and they either wittingly or unwittingly act in collusion with defiant students. Parents who challenge them are confronted by
belligerent students (Komote & Calitz, 1992:68). Van Niekerk & Meier (1995:69) refer to them as the "lost generation" among whom there is a high incidence of crime, violence, political radicalism and general anarchy. In the light of this reality, Ferreira (1994:61) maintains that "good moral character cannot simply be taught in schools, it must be learnt and lived in the home. The prime responsibility for its development rests not on teachers or friends, but with parents".

Student leaders are therefore expected to create a climate of emotional stability among students in school to enable parents to be effective participants in school deliberations. School leaders and their followers can take heed of the fact raised by Bredenkamp (1990:7) that parents are primarily responsible for the education of their children and, as such, they should assume great responsibility for making their children feel safe and at home in this world and within the school situation. Parents have a right to claim a voice in the education of their children at school. It is therefore educationally accountable that parents co-participate with student leaders in decision-making and problem-solving processes in the school.

Parents whose relationship with student leaders and other stakeholders is healthy in school will be inclined to involve themselves in other school activities, particularly at extra-curricular level, where they may be able to make a positive contribution. A good relationship between parents, students and teachers will have to feature more prominently within the school milieu. Bredenkamp (1990:8) emphasises that what is important is not the general interest of the child, but joining forces on the basis of a common goal and mission, which impacts on the student personally. During collaborative encounters between students and parents, student leaders will benefit from those parents who have special skills and experiences or qualifications in a particular field.

Ferreira (1994:62) asserts that adolescents' relations with their parents vary from day to day. Their way of communication and behaviour normally vacillates.
Student leaders and their followers, because they are at an adolescent stage, strive for independence from parental control. This control can make them feel anxious and threatened. It is therefore imperative that constructive communication be established among student leaders, and between students and parents, which will lead to the manifestation of feelings of love, acceptance, trust and understanding in their relationship.

Student leaders and their followers may benefit from their partnership with parents in school governance. Kotze (ed.), (1987:14-16) identifies some of the contributions that parents may make in this collaborative partnership:

* Promote a healthy balance between academic and leisure activities.
* Afford increasing opportunities for responsibility.
* Accept that students are becoming more critical and help them try to see other points of view.
* Instil a healthy attitude to their heritage and to authority.
* Be firm and consistent in their actions.
* Love them unreservedly.
* Give them a feeling of security.
* Give them the best attention.
* Be patient.
* Gain their trust so that they confide voluntarily.
* Take interest in their school activities - school-work, sport and other activities.

3.4.2 **Student leaders' relationship with peers (followers)**

Initially the most significant people in the child’s life are family members, but later in his life peers become significant and their influence on his self-concept becomes greater and greater. Peer acceptance has a great influence on the student
leader’s life-world. The peer group spends a lot of time together talking, watching television, studying and even vandalising (Ferreira & Mathibe, 1993:5). The findings of Ferreira & Mathibe (1993:5) in peer relations further reveal that, as the adolescent grows older, the peer group plays an ever-increasing role in the formation of his own identity. The fact that student leaders and their followers in secondary schools are of adolescent age, has a direct bearing on their behaviour. Since the seventies, activism has been the model through which student leaders and their followers rediscovered their own identity and humanity. They identified obstacles which hindered their way to self-actualization and becoming, by initiating protest actions. According to Van Niekerk & Meier (1995:74), both school and home life has been directly affected by the growing body of young political activists. Militant action gives the youth a sense of personal power and the conviction that they can bring about change in their environment by their acts of protest.

The greatest portion of school learning takes place within the parameters of the peer group. The peer group dictates one’s allegiance and the individual finds that within the peer group there is a home which is meaningful to him. According to Van den Aardweg (1987:179), peer group norms and values are critical to the shaping of perception, cognition and action of the individual. Peer group can become the breeding ground of all forms of action. In order to have significant influence, a student leader needs to be totally accepted by his peers. In this manner a mutual interdependence between the student leader and his followers develops. A capable student leader will lead and inspire his peers to great feats (Lamprecht & Botha, 1996:3). A successful student leader will be able to motivate and provide guidance to his peers. The leader will also assist his peers to realise their full potential. The student leader also has the task to inspire his peers to be actively involved in the school activities be they academic, cultural, sport or just as a spectator (Vorster, 1995:2-3). It often happens that student leaders are rejected by peers because they are responsible for policy implementation.
According to Cawood (1989:148), to be a student leader entails leading or directing one’s fellow-students or peers in a definite direction. This direction or course may be called an aim, goal or objective. A true leader will have to know where he or she is leading his fellow-students. They should constantly remind themselves about where the school wishes to go, how it plans to get there, and how it has progressed in getting there (Knott, 1992:12). Student leaders in their interaction with their peers in school need to formulate clear goals. The effective school needs to have a goal focus. Hayward (1994:89) asserts that "... without a course to follow, the school will be rudderless and at the whim of conflicting waves of pressure from students, staff and the community". The joint formulation of goals between student leaders and their peers will help establish a unique school identity and a reason for its existence.

Student leadership also implies a challenge to excellence. Cawood (1989:7) asserts that the excellence that the student leadership requires is primarily excellent service and excellent comradeship through excellent human relationship. Leadership also provides the student leader with an opportunity to overcome a feeling of inadequacy. Student leadership is the privilege to provide leadership to one’s peers and also to gain valuable experience in promoting human relations.

In some traditionally black schools, the soundness of human relations among peers and other stakeholders is threatened. Schools are troubled by internal turmoil. Students are restless, some come to school with knives, guns and other lethal weapons (Calitz & Shube, 1992:34). They use drugs and alcohol. The education of students in these schools is embedded in all forms of tensions. The system of interpersonal relationship that manifests itself in each school reflects the turmoil in the larger society (Calitz & Shube, 1992:34). It is within this type of environment that the student leader faces the challenge of gaining hold on their peers. The student leader therefore is expected to remind his peers that the school milieu is an educational institution which exists to provide the right atmosphere
and proper direction for the growth of the individual to enlarge his personality by increasing his knowledge, to cultivate his aesthetic taste, to frame his character and to equip him with suitable skills (Komote & Calitz, 1992:67).

Student leaders also face the challenge of promoting among their followers, school citizenship, learning and leadership which, according to Cawood, 1989:149) entail:

* Helping students cultivate school pride.
* Involving students in meaningful undertakings.
* Cultivating an understanding of school rules.
* Encouraging high standards of learning.
* Providing a forum for student opinion and contributions.
* Representing the interests of the students and conveying student opinions.
* Introducing a process that will allow student leaders some participation in policy-making and problem-solving.
* Preparing leadership council members, sports leaders and leaders of societies for their tasks.
* Creating opportunities for members of the leadership council to act as leaders.
* Creating opportunities for class leaders and other non-leaders to act as leaders.
3.4.3 Student leaders in relation to teachers

Galego (1994:76) asserts that the personality of a teacher and his attitude towards and understanding of students are of major importance for the total social and emotional growth and adjustment of students. The exposure to school expands the psychological experiences available to students and extends their milieu to include teachers and a new learning environment (Galego, 1994:74). According to Komote & Calitz (1992:62), teachers and students occupy different positions and statuses. Under these circumstances it is essential that a trusting and meaningful relationship be developed between teachers and students. A true teacher will approach and deal with students in a manner that can be referred to as nurturing, caring, inspiring and loving (Dreyer, 1994:72). In this regard the teacher assumes the role of being a mentor. According to Dreyer (1994:72) the ideal teacher-student relationship is that of a mentor-protege relationship. The mentor helps the protege to explore their potential and to see beyond themselves. It is in motivating the students to utilise their potential that the teacher often experiences great success.

The teacher needs to understand that a student leader and his followers are equal partners in education. According to Tsipane (1997:iv) the teacher needs to regard the student leaders as people who also care about their future. This means that student leaders and their followers endeavour to make a meaningful contribution towards the constitution of this world, as well as that of the school. In his relationship with student leaders and their followers, the teacher needs to make provision for students’ self-discovery and self-actualization, to achieve "... autonomy in his own sphere for it is the child of today who will have to take his place as responsible adult in society tomorrow" (Bredenkamp, 1990:8).

Student leaders are subject to the authority of the teachers. The authority that student leaders have is delegated authority and competence. This implies that in
all student leaders' activities in school, they are accountable to teachers. This implies that teachers should behave in such a manner that students can look upon them as 'the paragon of virtue' (Komote & Calitz, 1992:63).

Interpersonal relations that develop between student leaders and teachers should be positive. A teacher should create a conducive atmosphere, whereby student leaders can take initiative and be self-reliant in matters affecting them. In this respect a teacher's resourcefulness correlates significantly and positively with acceptable student behaviour, whereas a teacher's dictatorialness and punitiveness significantly and negatively correlate with student performance (Van den Aardweg, 1987:177). According to Van den Aardweg (1987:177) "...teachers who respond to students with authoritarian and coercive behaviours, accompanied by manipulation and persuasion, reduce the pupils' self-esteem, and thus the outcome of their behaviour is persistent disruption of school activities". The interaction between student leaders and teachers can be healthy if students themselves display a balanced emotional dimension. This will enable the teacher to create an atmosphere which will help student leaders and their followers develop."

"... various capacities of the mind such as intelligence, love of knowledge, aesthetic skills to appreciate beauty and nature, their spiritual nature by which they will move nearer to the divine nature and live a Godly, religious and moral life" (Komote & Calitz, 1992:67).

3.4.4 Student leaders in relation to the principal

Effective leadership and school governance are vital factors for the principal and student leaders in turning the school from the centre of violence and disruption to a place of learning and development. The principal is the most important teacher in the school. According to Komote & Calitz (1992:5-9) "... the success of human relations must also radiate from the principal's personality, his or her approach and administrative skills...". To succeed in managing human relations the principal
must also manage himself. The principal is expected to maintain a structure of order in the school. To enforce school rules, the principal is now expected to collaborate with the student leaders. Discipline procedures, pupil rights and regulations need to be deliberated by the principal together with student leaders. According to Van den Aardweg (1987:177), students are likely to accept rules and procedures developed through mutual interchange and discussion. If these rules and procedures are imposed on student leaders and their followers by an authoritative principal, feelings of resentment are aroused which may result in violence and disruption of learning.

If the principal in his dealings with student leaders and their followers becomes emotionally involved, unreasonable or gets into temper tantrums, the interpersonal relations may be destroyed. The principal is therefore expected to take student leaders into his confidence and establish a good rapport in their working relationship. A harmonious relationship can only develop among student leaders and the principal if they both engage in joint decision-making. The problem only arises when students do not regard the principal as their significant other, that is, if they do not provide the principal with a "ready-made entrance to their value system" (Galego, 1994:74). In this instance, the principal’s life may be in jeopardy as it was the case during the period of crisis in black education. Students fired principals. They interrupted teaching so that they could necklace a suspected traitor. They terrorised teachers who offended them (Van Niekerk & Meier, 1995:76-77). The principal also became a victim of students’ misdirected attacks.

The principal, in order to avert any confrontational attitude, should involve student leaders in planning. This will enable them to jointly formulate a mission statement for the school. The mission statement is a broad statement of intent to direct the overall state of the school (Hoy & Wood, 1993:29). Through the mission statement the principal and student leaders will understand why each individual is performing a particular action and precisely what is required of him or her at the
completion of the task (Knott, 1992:11). The mission statement will have to embrace educating the student leadership about the values of the community and to instil among them the love for their fellow-men, responsible adulthood and career orientation. The principal should harmoniously collaborate with student leaders and their followers in maintaining the school’s traditions, improving the image of the school in the community and by promoting school pride and loyalty to the school among all stakeholders.

3.4.5 **Student leaders’ relation to the community**

According to Möller and Maimane (1992:412), the aftermath of the 1976 Soweto students’ uprising saw a new breed of pupils emboldened by their influence on events and determined to impose their revolutionary ideals on education authorities, teachers and the community at large. Thousands of black youths took to crime and drugs in the face of a degenerating social fabric caused by disruptions in education, endemic violence and a lack of regard for authority (Möller & Maimane, 1992:412). The cultural and traditional forces which generated cohesion in black societies began to decline noticeably in the face of the resurgence of student uprisings. The school became the breeding ground for political unrest which spilled over to the larger community (Van Niekerk & Meier, 1995:74). Student leaders became the embodiment of power and control in schools and refused to yield to school authorities and the authority of significant others in the community, whom they despised. Human relations between student leaders and members of the community were adversely affected.

Student leaders will have to understand that education is fundamentally based on relationships. These relationships will become significant only when meaningful integration and participation have been established, and when both parties accept responsibility in the society (Bredenkamp, 1990:6). Student leaders will have to strive to find the basis for cooperation with all the partners who are concerned
about the school. They have to maintain a dynamic interaction with the community. The community members and student leaders have the rights and duties to contribute towards the learning of students. It is therefore imperative that student leaders communicate harmoniously with all role players in education and translate this harmony into the broader community. For example, the organisation of speech or academic days will enable student leaders to interact with prominent members of the community, thereby affording them the opportunity to inform the role players whether the school has met its aims and objectives during the year. It is during these functions that student leaders meet students, staff, governors, parents, families of students and business leaders. Students may also participate in community initiated campaigns such as keep the streets clean, anti-drugs, help the needy, road safety and tree-planting (Komote & Calitz, 1992:67).

3.5 STUDENT LEADERS IN RELATION TO OBJECTS AND IDEAS

Vrey (Van Rensburg, Landman & Bodenstein, 1994:159) states that in constituting his life-world, the child is increasingly concerned with ideas. As with objects, people or the attitudes of people towards himself, he becomes aware of the significance of ideas and their implications for his own identity. If the child constitutes an inadequate life-world, this eventually influences his relations to ideas. Moreover, the absence factors for his becoming inhibit the proper development of his cognitive powers. Therefore the life-world of the child, and by implication the student leader, will be inadequate, because it focuses mainly on the essences of survival and the rejection of things and/or ideas that cannot be utilised for survival purposes.

Most black student leaders come from a low socio-economic environment. The school area where most of them live is often unattractive with poor recreational facilities. Adults in their area often dress carelessly and they display hopelessness and depression. A considerable number of youth do not progress satisfactorily towards adulthood and do not fulfil pedagogically acceptable expectations. These
students are restrained in becoming responsible adults (Vorster & Van der Spuy, 1995:62). Their approach to school-work is eventually negative, incoherent and undisciplined, resulting in chronic under-achievement, truancy and an inclination to destroy school property.

Political violence has also contributed towards the retardation of the field of education in that it has disrupted the normal living of people, putting the entire community on the run (Mhlambo, 1993:82). This has resulted in children exhibiting disinterest in learning and looking burdened and discouraged beyond their years. They show a lack of physical energy and enthusiasm and are often tired and listless. "Affectively, they tend towards depression, apathy and aggression. Connotively, they seem to lack the will to achieve and the intention to actualise their potential. This is often reflected in their lack of academic success. Thus cognitively, they are also largely negative" (Vorster & Van der Spuy, 1995:62).

It is imperative that student leaders orientate themselves with the world of ideas and objects. The horizons of the students are extended by teachers as they expose them to various aspects of the curriculum. Subjects within the curriculum are the actual extracts of many parts of reality. Through the subjects they study, students get to know and understand the world in which they live, e.g. they learn about plants and animals through the subject Biology (Mhlambo, 1993:83).

Student leaders should also develop an interest in their scholastic work, and be motivated. They should be prepared to explore their own potential either physically or cognitively. This will lead to their adequate emancipation. A further look can be taken at student leaders' relation with objects and ideas.

3.5.1 School Policy

Once student leaders in collaboration with all role players have formulated school aims and objectives, they can translate them into a school policy. A policy can be
referred to as a statement of expected behaviour for learners in a given situation (Dean, 1987:34). It is a statement of regulations for students and staff. The school policy should include, *inter alia*, guidelines pertaining to discipline, conduct, election and duties of student leaders.

### 3.5.2 School rules

School rules are formulated and promulgated in order to facilitate and maintain discipline (Gorton, 1993:184). School rules are developed in order to enhance an orderly environment that is required for effective teaching and learning. Rules regarding, *inter alia*, the following, may be addressed by student leaders:

* Prescribed uniform.
* Timeous arrival of students.
* Fighting or fooling around at school.
* Smoking and the use of drugs.
* Vandalism.
* Interference with teaching and learning by students.

Van der Westhuizen (ed.), (1991:365) maintains that the student leader should be familiar with the value system within which a school functions. This serves to guide every action of students. The system of rules allocates rights and duties to students and lays down the procedures according to which activities are carried out.

### 3.5.3 Discipline

Discipline, according to Badenhorst (ed.), (1987:81) does not merely imply punishment, but it also refers to leading, influencing for the better, censuring, reproving and exercising that which is good and right. On the negative side it
entails controlling, curbing, restricting, prohibiting, admonishing, compulsion and punishment.

Van den Aardweg (1987:177) states that the school encourages violent reactions in students by denying them power and rights as well as disciplining them in a harsh manner.

3.5.4 Punishment

Students at adolescent age cannot accept physical punishment and man-handling as well as humiliation without retaliating (Van den Aardweg, 1987:178). This implies that student leaders ought to know that a tension-ridden atmosphere is not conducive to learning, respect of authority and the development of an integrated personality. The student's self-concept is the most essential determinant of behaviour. "Growth in self-concept occurs in an accepting, warm, empathic, open and nonjudgemental environment which allows students the freedom to explore their thoughts and feelings in order to solve their own problems" (Cherian, 1990:99).

3.5.5 Authority

According to Van der Westhuizen (ed.), (1991:358) authority is the right granted to the leader to make decisions, to assign duties to subordinates and to expect them to conform to expected behaviour. This implies that the student leader by virtue of being elected into a leadership position, is given the power to make decisions, give instructions and expect a certain reaction. Van der Westhuizen (ed.), (1991:358) further emphasises the fact that a group or organisation will only accept a person's leadership if he acts within the bounds of his authority and decision-making competence.
3.5.6 Delegation

After the task analysis of the programme has been carried out by student leaders, classification of activities should take place so that they can be ordered and grouped. Since student leaders cannot do everything by themselves, they ought to divide activities and delegate tasks to other individuals or to sub-committees/portfolios. Delegation entails trust and making others responsible for the execution of tasks. Responsibility and delegated authority are integrated components of delegating (Van der Westhuizen (ed.), 1991:413-412).

3.5.7 Alcohol

According to Dednam (1993:80) an alarming rate of abuse of alcohol among secondary school pupils is taking place in South Africa. Alcohol abuse results not only in detrimental physical effects but it also increases teenagers' readiness to experiment with drugs. The outcome of alcohol abuse is, *inter alia*, psychological and social problems as well as problematic interpersonal relationships. Student leaders ought to understand that alcohol abuse contributes towards the changes in a child's normal pattern of behaviour (Dednam, 1993:80). It is the responsibility of student leaders, teachers, principals and parents to appreciate the enormity of curbing this problem among students.

3.5.8 Drugs

Drugs such as marijuana or dagga lead an individual to focus only on the present. "The ability to conceptualise future consequences is markedly impaired and the person cannot see beyond the immediacy of the present stress" (Van den Aardweg, 1987:178-179). The student who uses drugs will tend to increasingly focus on current frustrations and he will lose his mental grasp on future consequences and thus even go to the extent of extending goals. Drug abuse, school vandalism and violence go hand-in-hand (Van den Aardweg, 1987:179).
3.6 STUDENT LEADERS IN RELATION TO MORAL AND RELIGIOUS VALUES

According to Vrey (1993:101) one of the aims of education is to bring the child to a point where he supports the norms of his society from personal conviction. His culture contains moral, religious, social and other norms derived from the corresponding values esteemed by the community. The totality of these values is subsumed in the way of life maintained by that community. The child's relations with religious and moral values develop to a point where he will conform to such religious and moral norms of his own free will. According to Bredenkamp (1990:10) "... the belief that one is called always acts as an incentive to work conscientiously with enthusiasm and competence and, ultimately, to accept responsibility before God".

3.6.1 Moral development

Good moral character is initially developed at home and then reinforced at school. According to Ferreira (1994:62) "... parents reflect the values that they wish to engender in their children. At first children look to the actions of their parents as examples of appropriate behaviour, and only later gradually turn to the norms and authority that these actions represent". As the child becomes emancipated, he becomes increasingly capable of conceptualising and generalising moral norms, and ultimately he understands moral concepts. He thus achieves morality based on principles.

Gouws & Kruger (1994:174) state that conscience is a uniquely human inherent ability to distinguish between right and wrong, good and evil and proper and improper. It is influenced by teaching habits and education.
3.6.2 **Religious development**

It is essential that every student leader understands that he has a personal relationship with God, that his life on earth is based on that mercy and that he may appropriate all the gifts of God (Bredenkamp, 1990:6). Le Roux (ed.), (1992:71) sees a personal religion as a means of faith and hope to which a child can cling during the uncertainties and vicissitudes of his development. Two authentic requirements would be authentic knowledge and practical demonstration of religious norms.

According to Gouws & Kruger (1994:178), age in itself cannot cause a change in moral judgement, rather a change in age is accompanied by a change in cognitive, affective, social and other kinds of development that affect moral development.

### 3.7 SUMMARY

This chapter dealt with the life-world of the student leader. This entailed the experience and life-world of the student leader. The student leader's relationship with himself and the significant others was discussed. In terms of the relation with himself, the physical self, psychic self and the aspirations and expectations of the student leader were discussed. The discussion of the student leader's relation with significant others included: the student leader's relation with parents, peers (followers), teachers, principal and the community. The author further discussed the student leader's relation with objects and ideas, which also included school rules and drugs. Finally, the student leader's relation to morals and religious values was highlighted.

In the next chapter accountable leadership and leadership skills will be discussed.
CHAPTER 4

ACCOUNTABLE LEADERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS

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4.10 SUMMARY
CHAPTER 4

ACCOUNTABLE LEADERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is an attempt to address all the aspects of student leadership and the various leadership skills. The concept leadership will be explicated together with all the facets that inspire a leader. The composition, election and induction of student leaders will be treated. The structural foundation of student leaders will also be discussed. Under this topic an attempt will be made to discuss the constituent assembly and the constitution that serves as the basis of student leadership. The components of the structural foundation such as meetings, goals and objectives of student leadership will also be treated in this chapter. An evaluation of student leadership will be presented.

The techniques or skills of leadership will be discussed. Under this topic the following sub-headings will be treated: decision-making skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills and conflict management skills:

4.2 STUDENT LEADERSHIP

A nation, an institution, an organisation or group and family which is without leadership, lacks direction and power. Leadership is essential to the organised functioning of the group. Success can be achieved in the group if there is personal involvement and fulfilment on the part of the members. Leadership, and by implication student leadership, implies that an individual is bestowed with responsibility by a group to give a calculated direction in a particular field (Van der Westhuizen (ed.), 1991:358). A legitimate student leader is the person who is entrusted with the necessary authority and decision-making capacity to manage
the group’s responsibility. Authority can be defined as the right granted to the student leader to take decisions in collaboration with members of the group, to assign duties to followers and to expect them to conform to anticipated behaviour (Van der Westhuizen (ed.), 1991:358). Cawood (1989:49) presents leadership as the real leader performance or as an art. On the other hand, Tlale (1990:22) refers to leadership as the capacity endowed to the individual by members of the group to be able to influence the activities of the followers in their endeavour to reach a particular goal. It entails the ability to handle people, to represent people and the power to initiate events on behalf of the followers.

It stands to reason therefore that leadership is the process that enables the group to move toward goal setting and goal achievement. Any person can be a leader at any given time. Leadership can be learned. Learning about leadership arises with comprehending what constitutes a leader and a group (Bernhard & Walsh, 1990:160. A student leader is therefore expected to formulate goals and ideas to which he or she is strongly committed. A student leader is also expected to employ the leadership process. The implication for a student leader in this regard is that the leader is the one who succeeds in getting others to follow him or her. Gorton (1993:67) presents his definition of leadership as "those activities engaged in by an individual or members of a group which contribute significantly to development and maintenance of role structure and goal direction, necessary for effective group performance". Inherent in leadership are the following qualities: inspiration, giftedness and technique or skills (Cawood, 1989:49).

Leadership is a function of needs existing within a particular environment and entails relationship between an individual and a group. The student leader has the capacity to initiate a new structure or procedure for the purpose of accomplishing organisational goals and objectives (Gorton, 1993:68). The initiation of change by student leaders at school can come about through involving all the stakeholders in dialogue and constructive discussion. The organisational or group vision which
the student leader must possess is required to direct the organisation towards its future. In addition to the possession of vision, the student leader should be capable of articulating it in order to succeed in realising the organisational objectives.

4.3 THE STUDENT LEADER AND INSPIRATION

The student leader must be an inspired person. He should be a mover who knows the direction and how to get there and how to enlist others in attaining the institutional goals and objectives. The student leader needs to be conscious of the two virtues of honesty and integrity which structure the character of a leader, making him a model for others. According to Cawood (1989:49) a "leader is inspired by an ideal of service". Willingness to serve and the manner in which he serves, forms a strong basis for leadership. The student leader should have insight which will enable him to recognise those who need guidance and inspiration to become productive members of a collective effort. True leadership qualities can only be exhibited by the leader's dedication to a cause. The student leader blends the best qualities of the followers into a concentrated endeavour that benefits the whole student body. An inspired student leader will initiate a structure which will help in delineating the relationship between the leader and the followers in an attempt to establish a well-defined pattern of the organisation, create channels of communication and methods of procedures (Gorton, 1993:69). The definition of the behaviour expected from the followers within the institution and the emphasis on the significance of having institutional goals and objectives is a fundamental task that the student leader should fulfil.

Leadership also entails skill in handling people. The student leader should be a person who is endowed with the gift of responsiveness to people and to human factors in any given situation (Cawood, 1989:520. The leader should identify himself with the group. The fact that leadership involves willingness and
preparedness to accept responsibility not only for one's actions, but also for the actions of the group, should be crystal-clear to the student leader. The leader should be open-minded. Open-mindedness arises from open-heartedness. This entails respect for the feelings and opinions of others (Cawood, 1989:52). The student leader must be able to think clearly and strategically.

Leadership involves power (Bernhard & Walsh, 1990:18). The student leader derives power from his or her position. Power is given to the student leader by the followers and the group. The student leader has the power to direct the affairs of the group. The types of power that the student leader can use are, *inter alia*, persuasion, inducement and activation of commitment among followers. According to Gorton (1993:55), power represents the "... capacity or potential for effecting desired results in one or more persons that would not have otherwise occurred". Power can be used by student leaders in a positive or negative manner.

Student leaders also have authority over their followers. Power and authority are used by some authors interchangeably. Authority can be defined as the right given to the student leader to make decisions within a well-defined framework, to assign duties to followers and to expect them to conform to expected behaviour (Gorton, 1993:49). Authority is therefore "power conferred", allowing the student leader to "decide, direct or control" (Gorton, 1993:49). Student leaders derive their authority from the principal, teachers and students. Leaders may possess authority in this particular situation, because traditionally, students who occupied a position of leadership, were accepted as having authority. Followers may also accept the authority of a leader by virtue of the fact that they respect the person or the position and therefore are willing to allow their behaviour to be directed, irrespective of their judgement of the merits of the directives. The student leader may derive authority from being a legitimately elected student representative. That in itself gives the leader the power to issue directives and expect followers to conform to those directives.
4.4 COMPOSITION, ELECTION AND INDUCTION OF STUDENT LEADERS

4.4.1 Composition

The student leadership comprises of representatives who are *bona fide* registered students who are elected to lead other students. Vorster (1995:3) emphasises that there is no fixed rule or definite prescription for the number of student leaders to be elected. Variations are dependent upon each school.

Leaders may either be informally chosen or formally elected to the position by members of the group. Tlale (1990:22) identifies three types of leaders:

* The emergent leader - In the event of the emergence of a leader a person raised to a position of leadership with no formal authority. In this case, members of the group or followers have recognised and accepted the leader’s influence.

* The appointed leader - This is a student or group of students who have been identified by educational managers and who are appointed to positions of leadership. They are then exposed to a clearly-defined sphere of authority.

* The elected leader - The elected leader is a student leader or a number of student leaders who are formally elected by a group of students.

According to Van der Westhuizen (ed.), (1991:360), the identification of student leaders is the responsibility of the whole corps of teachers within the school. The argument posed, is that the task of educational managers is to manage the process of appointing and election of student leaders. Cawood (1989:118) emphasises that every school should endeavour to elect student leaders who are appropriately
equipped to meet the purposes for which the student leadership exists. Vorster (1995:3) states that the success of a student leader is dependent upon his particular skills or abilities. These abilities or skills can be acquired through being exposed to workshops or symposia where they can be taught.

Van der Westhuizen (ed.), (1991:360) propagates the idea that principals should identify among others, the following characteristics among potential student leaders:

* Personal neatness and neatness of work.

* Friendliness towards teachers and fellow-pupils.

* Humility without passivity.

* Choice use of language.

* Should be able to distinguish between right and wrong, i.e. should have a sense of responsibility.

* Should be aware of evil deeds and be able to report them.

* Trustworthiness at all times (integrity).

* Should be loyal.

* Should be hard-working.

* Should be accepted by staff and pupils.
4.4.2 Election

Cawood (1989:118) regards the election of student leaders as a valuable experience to students only when the process is accurately planned and executed in terms of proven scientific methods. Consideration of the various aspects of the democratic election processes is important; that is, the criteria for candidature, participation of all students, correct procedure, the role played by staff be defined and the election of the executive body of students be explicitly tabulated. Once elected, student leaders are capable of developing a high group morale and can create the *esprit de corps* among followers. This cannot be established by student leaders who are appointed by the principal and his management team, but only by student leaders who are voted into office by their fellow-students (Vorster, 1995:4).

The participation of teachers in the election of student leaders may be objectionable to some students. The exclusion of teachers may at times be recommended. Teachers may be expected to provide guidelines enabling students to identify and elect excellent students. Teacher participation in the student election process may imply that those elected are students who will solely carry out the edicts of the school principal and staff, instead of the wishes of the electorate, that is, the students. Follet (1987:42) argues that the whole system of teacher involvement in the student election process, should be disqualified as undemocratic. On the other hand, Cawood (1989:123) advocates the idea that teachers should be empowered with veto rights. This implies that teachers should have the power to veto the election of any "doubtful" candidature (Cawood, 1989:123).

The electoral officer should either be the principal, the deputy principal or any officer appointed by the principal in collaboration with the outgoing student leaders. The executive of the student leadership body should be formed by the president, the deputy president, the secretary, the deputy secretary and the treasurer (SRC Constitution, 1990).
Every student should be given the opportunity to elect a student leader. Duties of student leaders should be clearly defined. It is imperative that all students be prepared to participate in leadership activities in the school. Students may be elected as members of the executive body. They can also be elected to become leaders of sub-committees or portfolio committees. The following sub-committee or portfolio committees may exist in the school (Van der Westhuizen (ed.), 1991:354):

* Academic sub-committee.
* Entertainment sub-committee.
* Cultural sub-committee.
* Sports sub-committee.
* Disciplinary sub-committee.

If not elected in all these positions, students also stand another chance of being elected as class leaders.

(1) Nomination

Different procedures can be used for the nomination of candidates to stand for election as student leaders. Students may nominate candidates in writing. At times no formal nomination may be conducted, but all students in Std 9 (Grade 11) may form a list of candidates (Vorster, 1995:4). A short list may be compiled by the liaison teacher. An oral nomination may be made by pupils or a short list of all the eligible candidates may be compiled by the retiring student leaders (Cawood, 1989:120).

(2) Voting

The following procedure may be adopted in voting student leaders into office (Cawood, 1989:120):
The retiring student leaders may be accorded the same voting rights as the rest of the students of the school. The system in which the value of votes differs, is used in the election of student leaders. The Std 9 (Grade 11) vote can be the deciding factor in the election of student leaders. The school may decide on the allocation of the value of votes. In one school the following model may be used (Cawood, 1989:122):

* Std 6 = -
* Std 7 = 1 value
* Std 8 = 2 values
* Std 9 = 3 values
* Std 10 = 2 values
* Retiring leaders = 4 values
* Teachers = 5 values (if eligible)

Teachers in certain circumstances may not have the right to vote, and as such have no value. The non-involvement of teachers will serve to dissipate the perception asserted by Follet (1987:40) that "... the quality that we regard as indispensable when choosing prefects is a proven boldness of spirit, a state of resolution, a pitch of self-confidence, a degree of popularity or of extroversion that will enable candidates to cajole, reprimand or coerce, and generally to act in the name of the authority that appoints them".

The voting of the executive body of student leaders into their position may be done by using various criteria. The executive body is formed by the president, deputy president, secretary, deputy secretary and the treasurer. They may be voted into office through the following procedure (Cawood, 1989:123):

* On the basis of the highest number of votes.
* By the staff from among the newly elected student leaders.
* By means of an evaluation form with specific criteria whereby the newly elected student leaders are assessed.

* By the newly elected student leaders themselves.

* By a joint vote of the staff and newly elected student leaders.

(3) Term of office for student leaders

Student leaders in the executive position may be mostly matriculants. These leaders have a limited stay at school. Their period of stay is also affected by their preparation for the final year examination. During that time they cannot concentrate on their leadership duties. This is the period when the leadership vacuum develops within the ranks of students. The solution to this problem is to create a fixed period of changing leadership. It can either be from August to August or September to September (Cawood, 1989: 124). This period gives opportunity to retiring leaders to contribute in counselling new leaders. Retiring leaders appear to the new student leadership as role models and they help in giving new leaders techniques of avoiding problems during their term of office (Von Maltitz, 1992: 33).

4.4.3 Induction of new student leaders

The status of the new student leadership can be enhanced through an elaborate induction ceremony. This form of function can exhibit to all students the extent of esteem accorded to the new leadership by the staff and parents. Before induction the new student leaders should be subjected to a symposium or workshop where they are educated about the skills of leadership. These workshops and symposia will expose them to decision-making, delegation, conducting meetings, planning, time-management and problem-solving skills (Von Maltitz, 1992: 32). Leadership
training should be conducted by individuals who have expertise in particular relevant fields. Once student leaders are trained, they should be expected to sign a declaration to uphold the rules and regulations of the school.

The induction of new student leaders should take place at a formal function which will be organised strictly for this purpose. Parents should be part of the function. Student leaders are expected to read the code of conduct. The steps to be taken for any infringement of the code of conduct must be clearly spelt out in the presence of the students' parents. It should be explicitly stated that dealing with infringements will be informed by the fundamental principles of the following nature (Metcalfe, 1996:24):

* Due process.

* The disciplinary process will be fair, just, corrective and educative.

* Punishment will fit the offence.

* Avoidance of public humiliation.

* The parent/guardian of the student will be informed and involved in the process of correcting behaviour.

4.5 THE STRUCTURAL FOUNDATION OF STUDENT LEADERS

4.5.1 Constituent assembly

Elected student leaders are expected to meet soon after induction to form a leadership structure. With the help of the teacher responsible for them, student leaders should start by drafting an agenda for the constituent assembly. The agenda may encompass, *inter alia*, the following points (Cawood, 1989:131):
The formal constitution of the constituent assembly.

Policy statement by student leaders.

Speech by the president.

Decision on logistics of student leaders' meetings.

Maintenance of discipline.

Formation of sub-committees.

Aims and objectives.

Planning seminars.

Dates of subsequent meetings.

Once all the items on the agenda have been exhausted, the leadership should then work on the constitution. The constitution should be in writing, it must be publicised, it should serve as a reference document. The language of the constitution should be explicit. It should receive the blessing of all the student leaders and staff. It must be reviewed from time to time.

4.5.2 Content of the constitution

The constitution should contain the following information (SRC Constitution, 1990):
* Name of the student leadership structure.

* Composition.

* Election procedure of student leaders.

* Election procedure of the president and the executive of student leaders.

* Job description of office-bearers.

* Portfolios or sub-committees.

* Goals and objectives.

* Meetings.

* Powers of student leaders.

* Termination of membership.

* Term of office.

* Duties of the executive committee.

* Amendments of the constitution.

* Dissolution.
4.6 MEETINGS

The elected student leadership should organise regular meetings. They contribute towards the promotion of teamwork. The high level of performance and functioning of student leaders in a school is dependent upon well-planned meetings. A schedule for meetings ought to be devised. Meetings can be held on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. The objective of meetings is among other things, problem-identification, briefing, discussions, debates, seminars and feedback sessions (Tlale, 1990:24). Long meetings should be held at the beginning of each term. The executive committee plans meetings acting in collaboration with the chairpersons of the sub-committees. The president chairs meetings of the executive committee, mass meetings, special mass meetings of students (SRC Constitution, 1990:3). In the absence of the president, the vice-president performs the duties of the president. The secretaries are in charge of the student leaders' records and conduct correspondence. Keeping copies of all correspondence dealt with by student leaders in their official capacity of all communication regarding student leaders in their official capacity, and of all communication regarding student affairs is still the work of the secretary. Writing of minutes during the student leadership meeting procession is the duty of the secretary. A copy of minutes should be sent to the teacher responsible for students and to the principal. One copy is then kept by the secretary. Minutes should be available to every student leader. The teacher entrusted with the responsibility of guiding student leaders ought to attend all student leaders' general meetings. He should be accorded an ex-officio member status (Cawood, 1989:138).

A mass meeting of all students needs to be held at least once a year and when it is necessary. The agenda to be discussed ought to be approved by the teacher responsible and the principal.

Important and regular meetings should be scheduled in advance so that everyone knows the dates for student leader meetings, sub-committee meetings and for
meetings throughout the year. Meetings can be defined in terms of membership. Debating society meetings, sports meetings, quarterly meetings are examples. Alternatively meetings can be identified in terms of their dates during the course of the year. Classic examples of such meetings are the weekly, monthly, quarterly and the annual general meetings. Such designations do give an indication of the timing and the type of membership expected to attend (Bell, 1988: 184).

Meetings may be summoned for various reasons. Some may be called to solve problems, some may be called to seek information or to test opinions. Other meetings may be called to persuade or influence followers. A leader in such a predicament may be expected to negotiate some conditions or compromises (Bell, 1988: 183-184). If a meeting is summoned in order to take a decision about a particular matter, then student leaders should ensure that the decision is taken.

Report-back meetings enable student leaders who attended conferences, youth camps, courses and other leadership workshops to address student leaders about new information and resolutions taken.

The following items are the highlights of the points deliberated by the KwaMashu student leaders at a workshop. The following points and their resolutions were to be reported back to student leaders at school level (KwaMashu Education Crisis Workshop, 1992: 1):

* The general deterioration of the culture of learning and teaching.

* Sexual harassment of female students involving being forcibly removed from the schools and gang-raped by thugs/criminals who are not students.

* Drunkenness and drug abuse involving both teachers and students.
* Carrying of weapons in the schools.

* General lack of discipline which manifests itself through lack of punctuality, failure to do school-work, lack of mutual respect, etc.

* Teachers upgrading themselves at the expense of students.

* Parents are alienated from participating in school matters.

* Leakage of examination papers, either internal or external.

* Vandalism and theft of school property.

* Harassment of contracting workers and theft of their equipment.

The discussion of such issues as presented above can foster the attitude of positive thinking among student leaders. The reporting student leader ought to state the resolutions taken to address these issues. A programme of action should then be adopted. It should have a well-defined time-frame. Student leaders should not only focus on broader issues, but should also focus on school rules and their duties.

4.7 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

"A group without a common goal is like a ship without a rudder. The group may not disintegrate, but its efforts will be erratic and its progress will be uncertain" (Gorton, 1993:175). Student leaders need to lead their followers in a definite direction. The direction or course can be referred to as an aim, objective or goal (Cawood, 1989:149). Gorton (1993:75) refers to a goal as "an identifiable focal point in the future toward which effort is directed." A student leader needs to
have projections on an explicit objective. Once the objectives are clear, student leaders will take the lead with confidence and firmness of purpose. This will enable student leaders to keep the followers on the right tracks. For success to be attained, student leaders need achievable goals that are understood and accepted by their followers. The goals and objectives need to be re-examined annually. They should be clearly formulated and written down for all student leaders to understand and interpret. The involvement of followers in the formulation of goals and objectives is essential. The followers should eventually comprehend and accept these goals. The acceptability of goals by followers ensures joint commitment to them.

Goals can be differentiated into broad or long-term and immediate or short-term goals. The long- or broad-term goals tend to remain constant, because they reflect the tradition of a particular school. The short or immediate objectives are set for the current year (Cawood, 1989:149).

4.8 EVALUATION OF EFFECTIVENESS

Any group that wishes to be successful, should be evaluated from time to time to gauge its effectiveness. Evaluation of student leaders' performance is essential in identifying their strengths and weaknesses. The effectiveness of the group is based on the feelings of satisfaction rather than by the feelings of cohesiveness (Gorton, 1993:82). Satisfaction comes as a result of "positive feelings about group performance, recognition of the quality of the group’s output, positive feelings for other group members" (Gorton, 1993:82). The group's success depends on the student leaders' ability to have their goals and objectives realised.

The student leadership body should make an attempt to establish what impression the whole school community of students, staff and parents hold about their activities. Strategies to acquire such information entail holding an open discussion
with all stakeholders or formulating a questionnaire and having all the interest groups as respondents. This method will help extract the perception and information held regarding the activities and conduct of student leaders. Extracts from the evaluation need to be included in the student leaders' annual report. The principal is also entitled to present his or her own evaluation (Cawood, 1989: 164-165). This process enables students, staff and student leaders to be sensitive and understanding of obstacles and problems that the whole leadership body is encountering. It results in the identification of problem areas that hinder student leadership effectiveness (Gorton, 1993: 82).

The involvement of parents in student leadership affairs is based on the assumption that the relationship between education and society is a diabolical one. "The contradiction lies in the fact that education is both an agent of change and in turn is changed by society" (Fägerlind & Saha, 1995: 225). Student leaders and their followers come to school with divergent socio-cultural, political and economic backgrounds which impact on the activities of student leaders. They also come to school with elements of old and new ideological conviction. The societies in transition may contain elements of both in their educational system which student leaders are expected to manage and modify, and hence transform the educational institution.

4.9 TECHNIQUES OR SKILLS OF LEADERSHIP

Tlale (1990: 22) asserts that "...leadership is the ability to influence the activities of other people in their efforts towards reaching a goal". Schools serve as the appropriate arena where leadership abilities can be developed. Techniques or skills of leadership can be acquired at workshops and symposia, organised by the school to tap potential leaders. The following skills may be developed (Cawood, 1989: 53).
* Decision-making skills.
* Communication skills.
* Problem-solving skills.
* Conflict-management skills.

4.9.1 Decision-making skills

Decision-making is defined by Gorton (1993:7) as "... a process influenced by information and values, whereby a perceived problem is explicitly defined, alternative solutions are posed and weighed, and a choice made, then subsequently is implemented and evaluated". Although Gorton (1993:7) views this skill from the administrator's perspective, the author perceives it as a valuable skill that student leaders should acquire and make use of in their deliberations at school. The involvement of student leaders in decision-making processes empowers student leaders. Short (1994:505) asserts that to empower is to provide the stakeholder with a share in the movement and direction of the enterprise.

The determinant factors of the type and method of decision-making are the situation and the circumstances. There are circumstances that warrant that the leaders use autocratic methods instead of democratic ones in decision-making. The ideal method is the democratic approach to decision-making. Decisions can be taken through consultation and consensus resolution of issues. The majority vote can be made use of. The principal in certain circumstances is accorded veto power, which affords him/her the authority to break down deadlocks or to regulate student leaders' decisions.

4.9.2 Communication skills

From the leadership perspective, communication is of vital significance in any organisational interaction. Successful leaders are, in most cases, effective
communicators. The leader has the ability to communicate effectively, that is, he has the ability to transmit the message to followers and to hear and comprehend what they say in return. It is essential for student leaders to be able to formulate aims and objectives, to make decisions, to solve problems, propagate organisational values and to effect all the aspects of leadership communication.

Nieuwmeijer & Hall (1992:6) present the definition of communication in this respect: "Communication is a process by which people attempt to share meanings. It means the message must be sent, perceived, understood and the desired response must be provoked". A two-way process is part of communication. It takes place horizontally and vertically.

Good communication avoids ambiguity and the likelihood of misinterpretation. The communicator uses effective methods of communication, that is, the information is encoded in a particular medium either spoken or written and it is sent to the receiver. The content is relevant and authentic. Feedback is expected after the message has been communicated. If student leaders, the staff and the principal fail to communicate properly, school programmes will be impaired. Communication becomes successful once members of the sub-committees and other groups receive the views stated in a positive manner. Styles of communication that can be identified are verbal and non-verbal forms. Non-verbal communication entails memos, notices, reports, newsletters and other forms of written transmission of messages. To be effective, leaders must ensure that written information is comprehensible and responded to if there is a need. Meanings are not obscured. Tasks are clearly defined and communicated (Gorton, 1993:35).

Communication may be affected by seating arrangements when holding a meeting. There is an authority - subjects arrangement where the presiding officer is distinctly seated and the information flows in that fashion. Some authors advocate sitting in a circle because it ensures a free flow of ideas among members of a group. All members feel that they are equal. Bell (1988:187) asserts that the
leader should sit at the head of the table with other members equally spread around it. This form of chairing the meeting ensures that the discussion flows to and from the chairperson and not among the members of the group.

4.9.3 Problem-solving skills

Student leaders in their activities at school should expect that they will be confronted by a series of challenges or problems. Cawood (1989:69) asserts that there are problems that can be handled with ease, where others are complex and might not have easy solutions. Problem-solving skills will enable student leaders to handle problems with ease, and as such, facilitate the realisation of institutional goals. Keith & Girling (1991:122) define a problem as "a discrepancy between a present situation and a more preferred state of affairs". This definition tends to suggest that there is an obstacle or restriction which serves as an obstruction between the present and the ideal situation. Cawood (1989:69) presents three basic questions that can be deduced in problem-solving. These are:

* What is the present situation or position? (Situation)

* What is the ideal situation or position? (Aim or objective)

* How can we move from the present situation to the ideal situation? (Solution or plan of action)

In problem-solving processes, student leaders need to note that solutions are reached at scientifically. The gathering of facts is paramount. The participation of all the members of the group is essential. Keith & Girling (1991:129) tabulate the following procedure to be followed during the process of problem-solving:
* Problem awareness — this helps to focus attention on the existence of the problem.

* Problem diagnosis — brings in other views to ensure that the problem is correctly diagnosed.

* Expand the data gathering network.

* Problem definition — helps to gain acceptance and buy into problem-solving by those who have a stake.

* Generate alternatives — recognises and incorporates knowledge of other participants.

* Test alternatives.

* Select among alternatives — helps to ensure that there is commitment to selected alternatives.

* Develop action plan — gains the commitment of those who must implement and undertake tasks.

* Communicate plan — helps to facilitate the understanding of how the decision may impact on those outside of the unit and to reduce inadvertent sabotage.

* Implement the action plan — helps to ensure a co-ordinated team effort, provided there was adequate participation in prior steps.
Monitor, evaluate and revise — helps to ensure adequate feedback on success, as well as glitches by those directly affected.

In all their endeavours in problem-solving, student leaders need to take cognisance of the fact that their role is to subordinate their interests and act in accordance with the interest of their members. Student leaders are the architects in the development of a healthy and positive atmosphere in the school. Paradoxically student leaders are at worst, the demolishers of the productive efforts of the staff and the principal. They are capable of frustrating the otherwise creative, energetic and productive endeavours of the authoritarian principal. It is therefore imperative that the principal, staff and student leaders participate in problem-solving efforts, in order to nip all the arising problems in the bud.

4.9.4 Conflict management skills

Student leaders need to take cognisance of the fact that interpersonal and intergroup conflict occurs to a certain extent in all organisations, and that this is a natural part of a social relationship (Gorton, 1993:87). When students work or play together, the probability of differences and problems arising from that interaction is high. The differences that come about vary in intensity. The lowest level of intensity as ideas are exchanged, is referred to as the differences of opinion. The highest level of intensity is referred to as conflict (Cawood, 1989:95). When student leaders are confronted with this challenge, their role is not to eliminate conflict, but to reduce its destructive force and make it a positive drive in the organisation (Gorton, 1993:87).

Student leaders need to be exposed to programmes which will help them acquire conflict management skills. Tlale (1990:24) identifies the advantages and disadvantages of conflict. The advantages of conflict are that it:
* Generates creative and innovative forces among group members.

* Increases motivation and enthusiasm.

* Promotes self-awareness.

* Improves esprit de corps.

The disadvantages entail the retardation of goal achievement. Conflict promotes defensiveness, rigidity and sabotage (Tlale, 1990:24).

Conflict is inevitable. It arises under the following circumstances (Cawood, 1989:95):

* If the aims or plans of individuals are thwarted by other persons.

* If different groups compete for the same object.

* If there is defective communication among team members.

* If misunderstandings exist among team members.

* If team members maintain different points of view.

* If team members are fatigued.

Student leaders need to be trained to understand that conflict can be resolved through open and free discussion. Tlale (1990:24) asserts that conflicts can be resolved through problem-solving techniques. The types of conflict that can be identified are the interpersonal conflict, that is, the tension within the individual,
interpersonal conflict, individual against the organisation conflict, conflict between
groups and revolutionary conflicts (Cawood, 1989:95).

Gorton (1993:103) advocates the idea of arbitration in conflict resolution. He
states that conflict cannot be resolved through mediation, but the idea of arbitration
is at times essential. The concept arbitration, means that the conflict is submitted
to a third party for resolution. The sides involved in conflict should be prepared
to accept the arbitrator's judgement. In the case of the school, the principal, the
inspectors or members of the governing council may serve as arbitrators,
depending on who is involved in conflict.

There are techniques that can be used to resolve conflict. Student leaders may use
any of the following, depending on the nature of the conflict (Cawood, 1989:96):

* Avoiding — this means avoiding or postponing the conflict.

* Competition — this means engaging one another in a competitive strategy,
with little or no cooperation in resolving the conflict. The purpose is to
win.

* Accommodating — the leader in this respect is cooperative and reduces
competition to a minimum.

* Compromising — the leader is fairly cooperative and fairly competitive.

* Cooperation - the leader is highly cooperative and highly competitive.

The skill of reading and interpreting conflict is highly essential to student leaders.
4.10 SUMMARY

This chapter comprised the introduction, and a discussion on student leadership and leadership inspiration. It also focused on the composition, election and induction of student leaders. The techniques or skills aspect was widely covered. It included decision-making skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills and conflict management skills.

The next chapter will focus on a summary of the study and recommendations.
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

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CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this final chapter of the dissertation a summary of the previous chapters will be given and some of the most important findings from the research will be discussed. This will be followed by recommendations and a final remark.

5.2 SUMMARY

5.2.1 Statement of the problem

In essence this study investigated the question whether student leaders in black schools are equipped with the necessary skills and techniques required of them in order to participate meaningfully as leaders in the school situation. It also addressed the nature of the life-world of the student leader in black schools.

5.2.2 Theories and styles of leadership

The purpose of this chapter is to expose student leaders not only to theories and styles of leadership but also to other leadership approaches explored by various theories. This will not only enable the student leader to understand the dynamics of leadership but also to understand himself or herself as a leader. Initially a broad definition of the concept leadership was treated, and leadership theories were examined. The trait theory, situation theory, contingency theory and the group function theory was discussed. These theories should give the student leader an insight into how the ancient and contemporary theorists viewed leadership.
When examining leadership styles it is evident that they are a reflection of the nature of control a leader uses in relating to his or her followers. Leadership styles identified were, *inter alia*, autocratic leadership style, democratic leadership style and *laissez-faire* leadership style. The success of any endeavour or undertaking by a leader depends on the quality of leadership and the appropriateness of the style that is used. Although the democratic style is ideal, Likert revealed circumstances when the leader exercises autocratic style of leadership (cf. 2.5.3).

The success or failure of the student leader will be determined by the manner in which followers observe and experience the leader's style as it impinges on the consciousness.

The research studies undertaken by various prominent leadership theorists of the twentieth century were also highlighted (cf. 3.5). What is noteworthy and conspicuous in their theories is the identification of leader behaviour which relates to leader effectiveness. This refers to task and relationship dimension (cf. 3.5). The task oriented leader is concerned about assigning tasks and roles to his or her followers, directing their work, setting and maintaining standards and having an unwavering focus on the task to be accomplished. The task oriented leader displays effectiveness in task fulfilment and goal realisation. However, the human relations among task oriented leaders are ever strained and the situation is ever volatile for conflict eruption.

On the other hand the relationship or human relations oriented leader is concerned about the wellbeing and esteem of his or her followers. This entails listening to them, being friendly and approachable and also being concerned about the welfare of the followers. This type of a leader brings about cohesiveness among his followers as well as their related mood. The outcome of this leadership is little task accomplishment.
5.2.3 The life-world of the student leader

In essence this chapter focused on the life-world of the student leader, particularly those in traditionally black schools. The life-world of the student leader entails experience. The focus therefore is inter alia on the student leader’s affective, cognitive and normative experiences and how he gives meaning to them. The student leader’s experience will enable us to comprehend how he or she relates to self, significant others, to objects and ideas and to moral and religious values.

Under Apartheid, the experience and life-world of black student leaders and their followers entail being exposed to an inferior, segregated education system and its subsequent chaotic and disruptive situation. They perceived that their education was inferior. It rendered them inadequate to face the challenges of a modern era. They felt neglected, ignorant and idle. Ultimately, through political influence, these student leaders and their followers were involved in the policy of making South Africa ungovernable resulting in the climate of conflict and violence in schools.

Escalating conflicts increased strains on educational relations. The student-principal, student-teacher, student-student, parent-student healthy relations were totally obliterated. The authority of the educator and that of the principal was suppressed by student leaders.

Despite all these iniquitous experiences of the past, the student leader is expected to uphold the values of democracy as spelt in the new South African constitution. The student leader is now expected to provide excellent service and excellent comradeship among students. The student leader will achieve this through excellent human relations.
5.2.4 Student leadership and leadership skills

This chapter concentrated on student leadership and leadership skills. It is imperative that each school should have a democratically constituted body of student leaders. Student leaders help in leading and directing the affairs of students in a definite direction. They are also the link between the principal, staff and students. Student leaders will share the aims, goals and objectives of the school with all the role players. A true leader will know where he or she is leading his fellow students.

What is noteworthy is that a student leader may have relatively acceptable leadership qualities but if they are not able to exercise them accordingly their leadership is bound to fail. It is therefore inevitable that student leaders acquire leadership skills. Initially the infrastructure which forms the basis from which student leaders can exercise their leadership skills was discussed before the techniques of leadership were discussed. The infrastructure comprises the composition, election and induction of student leaders (cf.4.4). The techniques or skills of leadership entail decision-making, communication, problem-solving and conflict management skills (cf. 4.11).

5.2.5 Purpose of the study

The researcher formulated specific aims (cf. 1.5) to determine the course of this study. The aims were realised by means of a literature study. On the basis of the aims and findings of this study, certain recommendations were formulated.
5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3.1 Development of a trust between student leaders and parents

(1) Motivation

The parent is basically responsible for the education of the child. The home provides a foundation upon which student leaders develop their attitude towards authority. At school it becomes spontaneous for student leaders to accept the authority of the principal and teachers. However, due to low educational background and the escalating political violence, parents are hopelessly bewildered and floundering. Instability, overcrowding, lawlessness and poverty are some of the factors that contribute to parents losing confidence in their capacity to provide direction, apply values and discipline and to communicate meaningfully with their children. They do not participate in their children's school programme and activities because of fear of victimisation.

(2) Recommendation

The recommendations are as follows:

* A proactive empowerment programme where parents can restore their dignity and self-assurance to address youth problems must be initiated in all black communities. This programme should lead to the formation of a parent-teacher-student association (PTSA).

* Parents must, through exercising their influence on the government, ensure that every school particularly those in disadvantaged communities, have trained school psychologists or counsellors. Student leaders will benefit from the programme.
* Parent should also ensure that every school has welfare service programmes handled by relevant professionals. This programme will cater for the needs of the disadvantaged youth in every school.

* Parents must play a major role in the school governing body in formulating a mission statement for the school. The mission statement of the school must embrace educating student leaders about the values of the community and to instilling in them a love for their fellow-men and their country.

* Parents, principals and teachers must deal with student leaders and their followers' problems by sensitising themselves to the needs of this group of students and adjusting their approach to them and giving guidance to student leaders if the situation required it. Effective communication should be established to sustain a healthy school climate.

5.3.2 Restoration of healthy relations between student leaders, the principal and teachers

(1) Motivation

The impact of school violence which entailed acts of vandalism, rioting, student-teacher assaults, parent-teacher assaults and student-principal assaults impacted heavily on relations within the school milieu in the past. The authority of educators was rejected by students, who took the law into their hands (c.f. 1.1). Schools were no longer a safe environment in which students could learn and the principal and teachers could work and teach. Activism became a model through which black students could rediscover their humanity. Militant action gave black students a sense of personal power and the conviction that they could bring about change in their environment and in schools. The principal and teachers were caught in the cross-fire in this state of affairs. Some principals even died in this volatile situation (c.f. 3.4.2).
In these changing times, the student leaders should take cognisance of the fact that they are entrusted with the responsibility of helping create a condition of stability and a sound organisational climate in the school. A climate refers to any given situation because this is effectively experienced by all the people in the situation. A healthy school climate brings about achievement, realisation of school goals and objectives and the enhancement of student and staff morale. It also brings about a better student and staff self-image and self-esteem.

The principal and teachers should strive to help student leaders develop a positive self-concept. Self-concept is the daily food of emotional health. A healthy self-concept will enable a student leader to develop the capacity to view himself or herself as a valuable, competing, loving and lovable leader having unique talents and a worthwhile personality to share in relationship with others. In that respect a healthy relation between student leaders, the principal and teachers will be achieved.

(2) **Recommendations**

* All student leaders must attend orientation programmes such as the student leadership development workshops designed by principals and education managers.

* The principal’s association must organise and encourage student leaders by means of talks, seminars and discussion groups.

* Seminars on leadership and leadership skills must be organised by principals and teachers for student leaders to be attended at least once at the beginning or towards the end of the year.
The school must maintain an open line of communication between parents and teachers to enhance students leaders' cognitive development and to discuss their educational problems.

Saturday clubs or related clubs must be established where student leaders and their followers can be offered recreation opportunities and the privilege of forming a meaningful relationship.

The principal and teachers must display the best possible attitude towards student leaders such as unconditional trust and acceptance, a sincere attempt to understand them and a sound relationship of authority.

The principal, teachers and student leaders in collaboration with parents must formulate a code of conduct for students.

The School Governing Body must ensure that every principal, teacher, student and parent serving in this body has knowledge and skills about leadership. It will be through knowledge of this kind of leadership that all role players will be able to accomplish self-development and institutional aims, goals and objectives.

5.3.3 Further Research

(1) Motivation

The elections of 27 April 1994 have ushered in a democratic dispensation in South Africa. One of the results of this dispensation was the establishment of a single system of education which has changed among other things, the school composition in the country. Many schools became multi-racial and multi-cultural in attendance. Students from advantaged and disadvantaged communities now attended school together for the first time. These students from both sides of the
social spectrum experience problems of adaptation and that of adjusting to the
diversity of cultures. Among student leaders there is a clash of interests, values
and ideals.

(2) Recommendations

A further research need to be undertaken to find out how student leaders from
different backgrounds have learned to cope with changes in their leadership,
particularly in multi-cultural and multi-racial schools.

Moreover, further research must be conducted concerning the need for establishing
leadership skills and techniques among student leaders.

5.4 FINAL REMARK

It is trusted that this study on student leadership in black schools will be of value
to new and serving student leaders with regard to orientating and enriching them
about leadership and techniques or skills of leadership. It is also hoped that this
study will contribute towards assisting education planners.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


